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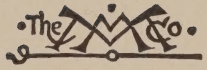

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NEAR EAST

FROM THE FOUNDING OF CONSTANTINOPLE (330 A.D. TO 1922)

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BY

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To the Memory of
My Father
WILLIAM VAIL WILSON DAVIS
ONE-TIME INSTRUCTOR IN THE
AMERICAN COLLEGE, CONSTAN-
TINOPLE, WHO FIRST INSPIRED
ME WITH INTEREST IN THE
LONG STORY OF THE LEVANT

PREFACE

This volume relates succinctly the history of the Near East from the founding of Constantinople to the Græco-Turkish crisis of 1922. Whatever its shortcomings, the present book can at least claim that it outlines the whole historic picture of those remarkable events which have now once again focussed the gaze of the world upon the unhappy Levant.

A story like this of the age-long debate betwixt East and West, whereof perhaps the first real non-legendary argument was held at the battle of Marathon, divides itself naturally into three main sections:

(1) Christian Constantinople.
(2) Early Islam and the Saracenic Kalifates.
(3) The intrusion of the Turanian Turks into Nearer Asia and next into Europe, and then their retreat and practical expulsion from the latter continent.

Such factors as the various "Balkan" races and kingdoms have, however, received all the space possible.

A just presentation requires that proper attention should be given to the capital events of former ages, despite a natural interest in rather recent happenings. It is more valuable to emphasize the importance of Leo the Isaurian's deliverance of Constantinople from the Saracens than to dwell at length on the battle of Kirk Kilisse.

In handling the events of the past generation, and especially in treating the diplomacy of the "Eastern Question," the aim has been merely to restate a few familiar facts for the purposes of reference, not to compete with several detailed, excellent, and very recent monographs. Conspicuous among these is that of my colleague, Professor Mason W. Tyler, *The European Powers and the Near East*, a work indispensable by its scope and original scholarship for Turkish events since 1875. Of corresponding value is also the *Fifteen Years of Turkish History, 1907 to 1922*, by Professor A. H. Lybyer of the University of Illinois, who has brought to his task a discriminating first-hand knowledge of the Levant.

No history covering the sweep of years from 330 to 1922 A.D. can pretend to be written throughout from primary sources, but a decent acquaintance with considerable masses of original material from Eusebius and Zosimus down to the recent blue books upon the present fate of the Ottoman Empire has perhaps permitted me to express myself with understanding. Scholars desiring a critical list of references on the subject can happily find them in the new co-operative bibliography, the "Guide to Historical Literature" prepared for the American Historical Association. However, I desire to make specific acknowledgment of my indebtedness to the following general works by modern authors (besides, of course, using very many monographs on isolated personages, events and institutions), namely:

For Christian Constantinople, to Bury, Finlay, Foord, Oman, Pears, Chalandon, Diehl, Schlumberger and Jorga.

For Islam and the Saracens, to Muir, Margoliouth, Sykes, Ameer Ali and Le Bon.

For the Ottoman Turks, to a much longer list of distinguished writers, whereof the more conspicuous are Von Hammer, Creasy, Menzies, Davey, Lane Poole, De la Jonquière, Halil Ganem and H. A. Gibbons, not to mention writers on very recent events, such as Marriot.

In preparing almost all parts of this work I have found suggestion and stimulus in the remarkable chapters on the Nearer Orient contained in the great Lavisse et Rambaud *Histoire Générale*. Many will recognize my large debt to the discussions therein by Wahl, Bayet, and especially by Rambaud. Taken together these constitute an achievement of French scholarship which by great misfortune has never received an English translation.

W. S. D.

Minneapolis, Minn.

NOTE ON THE SPELLING OF PROPER NAMES.

Familiar Græco-Latin names are ordinarily given in their Latinized forms, and less familiar Greek and Byzantine names by direct transliteration from the original. There is no standardized system of transliterating Arabic and Turkish names into English, and as a rule the form has been adopted which would seem most familiar to Western readers. Thus the great Ottoman potentate of the XVI century is given as "Solyman" instead of the more scientific "Souleiman."

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CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

The Christian Empire at Constantinople

330– 717 "East Roman" Period

330 Founding of Constantinople by Constantine the Great.

395 Permanent division of the Roman Empire, Constantinople capital of Eastern half.

527– 565 Reign of Justinian (I) the Great.

610– 641 Reign of Heraclius: great Persian and Saracenic invasions.

717–1071 "Byzantine" Period

717 Constantinople saved by Leo the Isaurian from the Saracens.

963–1025 Period of Conquest and expansion under Nikephoros Phokas, John Zmiskes, and Basil II. Byzantine apogée.

1071 Romanos IV defeated at Manzikert by Seljuk Turks. Loss of Asia Minor.

1071–1453 "Greek" Period

1081–1118 Partial restoration of Empire by Alexios I. Komnenos: Crusades begin.

1204 Capture and sack of Constantinople by Latins in Fourth Crusade.

1204–1261 "Latin" Empire at Constantinople, "Greek" Empire at Nicæa.

1261 Recapture of Constantinople by the Greeks (Palaiologoi Emperors).

1453 Capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks.

Rise of Islam and Saracenic Empires

610 Mohammed (born 570 ?) begins his prophetic career at Mecca.

622 The "Hegira"—flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina.

624 Battle of Bedr, first Moslem victory.

630 Capture of Mecca by Mohammed.

632 Death of Mohammed.

632–634 Abu-Bekr elected kalif: invasion of Syria and Mesopotamia.

634–644 Kalifate of Omar: conquests of Persia, Syria, and Egypt.

644–656 Kalifate of Othman.

656–661 Kalifate of Ali: civil wars begin among the Moslems.

661–750 Omiad dynasty of kalifs at Damascus. Arabia no longer center of Moslem world.

680 Hossein, son of Ali, killed at Kerbala: beginning of "Shiah" schism.

750 Overthrow of Omiads by Abbasside kalifs.

750–1258 Abbasside kalifs at new capital of Bagdad. Persian influence predominant.

786–809 Haroun-al-Raschid kalif: Saracenic apogée.

809–1258 Slow decline of Abbasside kalifate: growing power of Turkish guard. Emirates fall away. Rival kalifs at Cordova and Cairo.

1258 Sack of Bagdad by Mongols under Hulagu: end of Abbasside kalifate.

The Ottoman Turks

1288 Death of Ertoghrul in Anatolia.

1326 Capture of Brusa.

1353 (?) Turks take Gallipoli and enter Europe.

1389	Battle of Kossova, crushing of Serbia.
1402	Battle of Angora, Bayezid I overthrown by Timur the Tartar.
1453	**Capture of Constantinople by Mohammed II.**
1520–1566	Reign of Solyman the Magnificent: Ottoman apogée.
1526	Battle of Mohacz, crushing Hungary.
1529	First siege of Vienna.
1571	Battle of Lepanto.
1683	**Second siege of Vienna. Ottoman "High Tide."**
1699	Peace of Karlowitz: Ottoman disintegration begins.
1821–1827	Greek War for Independence. (Navarino, 1827.)
1853–1856	Crimean War: respite gained for the Turks soon wasted.
1877–1878	Turko-Russian War (Abortive Treaty of San Stefano, 1878).
1878	**Treaty of Berlin: creation of Bulgaria.**
1909	Deposition of Abdul-Hamid II: "Young Turk" revolution.
1912–1913	"Balkan" Wars: Turkey nearly extruded from Europe.
1914–1918	Turkey in the World War: collapse of Ottoman Empire.
1920	Abortive Treaty of Sèvres.
1922	Defeat of Greeks in Anatolia: revival of Turkish Nationalism.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NEAR EAST

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CHAPTER I

ORIENTALISM AND OCCIDENTALISM IN THE LEVANT; THE FOUNDING OF CHRISTIAN CONSTANTINOPLE

The Origins of Byzantium

It was about 660 B. C. when a deputation from Megara questioned the Delphic Oracle, "Where shall we found our projected colony?" Not without worldly wisdom the Pythoness answered, "Found it opposite to the 'City of the Blind.'" This "Delphic Utterance" was easy to interpret. Chalcedon was a Greek settlement upon the Asiatic side of the southern end of the Bosphorus. One mile away, on the European shore, there rose a far superior site, a hill-crested peninsula easy to defend. On the southern side was the blue Propontis (Sea of Marmora); on the eastern a noble salt river, the Bosphorus; on the northern that deep inlet and harbor which was the later "Golden Horn," while on the western opened the rich hinterland of Thrace toward which a relatively short wall betwixt the Propontis and the harbor could guard against attack. The adjacent waters abounded in fish. Already a lively commerce was developing between the Greek lands and the Black Sea ("Euxine"), all passing directly through the Bosphorus. The climate was healthful and not too severe. The Megarian colonists therefore made haste to obey the mandate of Apollo.

For the next thousand years *Byzantium* remained an important center, first as a city-republic of free Greece, then as a local metropolis of the Roman Empire. In 196 A. D. it was stormed by the stern Emperor Septimius Severus warring against his rival, Pescennius Niger. The city was ruthlessly devastated, but was speedily

rebuilt and resumed its prosperity. In 323 A. D., however, Byzantium again became a focus of war when Licinius, Emperor of the East, undertook to hold the place against Constantine, the first Christian Augustus, his western rival. Constantine captured Byzantium after a very violent siege. Licinius was taken in Asia and "disappeared" in captivity (324 A. D.). The old Megarian colony was thus left in the power of that daring imperial innovator, who had not hesitated to set the crucified Nazarene upon a religious equality with Jupiter Capitolinus.

Constantine the Great Founds "New Rome" (330 A. D.)

Probably Constantine had already resolved to found a new capital for the Eastern half of the unwieldy Roman Empire. Bitter experience had just taught him the capacities of Byzantium for defense even against a very skillful attack. Here, therefore, instead of say at Nicomedia (modern "Ismid") in Asia Minor, which was the spot favored by his mighty predecessor Diocletian, he would found his "New Rome"; *in* Europe but hardly *of* Europe;—with Thrace behind her, but looking out upon Asia, with ships from North and South sailing past the Eastern windows of her palaces; and with land-roads and sea-roads far more convenient than those of "Old Rome" by the Tiber, for directing the defense of the Empire upon the oft threatened Danubian or Euphrates frontiers.

Speedily now Constantine issued the necessary decrees. The inexorable despotism and centralization of the Later Roman régime put at his behests the treasury, a great corps of competent architects and engineers, and last but not least vast gangs of serfs ("coloni") or at least of "minores" (citizens of inferior rights) who worked practically at forced labor even as did the toilers on Cheops's pyramid. Constantine's courtiers affected to marvel at the wide boundaries which he paced off as the limits of his new capital. "I shall cease," announced he with resounding piety, "when He that goes before me shall stop!"

Constantine in fact seems to have desired to found a distinctly Christian city; although he prudently allowed the ceremonies for dedicating the new seat of Empire to present a curious mixture of Christian and pagan symbolism. Thus many churches were erected not in honor of personal saints, but of some impersonal qualities, such as "Holy Wisdom" (*Hagia Sophia*) so that they could be con-

tinued as temples to acceptable "Virtues" in case the old paganism should overpower the new Christianity.

In 330 A. D. after years spent in frantic building, at first probably upon hastily drawn plans and with temporary materials, the new capital was dedicated by elaborate rites and games prolonged over forty days, and culminating on the 11th of May, which was henceforth reckoned the birthday of the metropolis. The Emperor himself bore the golden statue of the "Fortune of the City" in the magnificent procession which marked the supreme act in these ceremonies. Henceforth the Roman Empire had two official capitals, and by general consent the new foundation was speedily known neither as Byzantium, nor as "New Rome," but as *Constantinople,* the City of Constantine.

Such a city immediately became "great" in fact as well as in name. The presence of one of the most elaborate and extravagant courts which ever existed, the command or the moral compulsion by the Emperor upon the Senatorial nobility to follow their master; the great opportunities offered trade and industry in the new capital; the amusements of the circus and theater, and the wholesale corn doles offered the proletariat; the more legitimate attractions of living at the center of the best intellectual and æsthetic life of the age; also the great advantage of extreme physical safety at a time when invasions were imperiling the Empire—these were some of the elements combining to swell the population of Constantinople. Probably its inhabitants far outnumbered those of the older Rome some decades before that fatal 410 A. D. when Alaric's Goths gave an irreparable blow to the aging Mother of Empires.

Down to 395 A. D. Constantinople was usually, although not continuously, the residence of at least one of the Emperors if the supreme office was temporarily divided. In that year the death of Theodosius I, the last ruler of the united Empire, led to the definite separation into the Western Empire (ruled by his son Honorius from Ravenna) and the Eastern Empire (ruled by his elder son Arcadius from Constantinople), which division became practically permanent. Henceforth an "Augustus" dwelled regularly by the Bosphorus, save when he was waging foreign wars or making peaceful progresses through his dominions.

So began the "East Roman Empire"; later transmogrified into what we call the "Byzantine" and then the "Greek Empires"—

each with its seat at Constantinople. To understand the peculiar genius of this great political unit one must indulge in a retrospect of the relations of Orientalism and Occidentalism in the Levant during the preceding centuries.

The "Westernizing" of the Levant

In 479 B. C. Pausanias the Spartan overthrew Mardonius the Persian at Platæa in Bœotia. So ended, disastrously for the Orientals, the first great assault of Asiastics upon Europe. In 331 B.C. Alexander of Macedon, boasting himself the "Captain General" of the Greeks, took ample revenge for the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, when he destroyed the vast host of Darius III at Gaugamela (Arbela). Then followed events involving far more than simply the ruin of Persia. Alexander penetrated far into Bactria (Turkestan), into lands whereof Greek-speaking men had hardly so much as known the names. He pushed into India and had the Punjab at mercy before the mutiny of his weary army forced him reluctantly to turn westward. He returned to Babylon and was busy with far-reaching schemes for amalgamating Europeans and Asiatics when death smote him in 323 A. D.

It is safe to doubt whether even the genius of Alexander could really have fused East and West; but it is still more certain that his premature death made it impossible for Greek influence to fasten itself securely upon those enormous lands reaching from the Euphrates to the Indus. True it is, however, that Græcianized satraps for the "Macedonian" Kings of the House of Seleukos (the most prominent of Alexander's successors) held sway far into the East for over a century; true also, that even in remote Bactria, kings called by such good Hellenic names as Eukratides and Menander retained power possibly as late as 100 A. D.,—striking coins with Greek legends and probably maintaining a somewhat Hellenized court in those cities which preceded Samarcand and Bokhara. Certain, too, it seems that considerable colonies of Greek (or at least Græcianized) merchants, soldiers of fortune, entertainers, actors, and even litterateurs existed in many capitals, far East of the Euphrates, and so continued for generations.

Nevertheless it is fair to say that Hellenization, so vehemently championed by Alexander and the Seleukids, never struck root far beyond Mesopotamia. It is a tribute to the Greek genius, the

genius of a numerically weak nation, that it was, however, indeed able to tighten and to retain its hold upon the Levant proper. The triumph of the Greek language over the most tenacious and self-sufficient of all the Semitic races is a witness to this victory. The Septuagint version of the Jewish Scriptures, prepared obviously for the Hebrew multitudes who had discarded their native vernacular; the intrusion of Greek names into strictly Jewish circles, enrolling even a Philippos among the Christian disciples; the ability of such a crude tyrant as Antiochos Epiphanes (175-164 B. C.) to come measurably near to forcing the Jews into repudiating outright their inveterate religious usages—these are decisive testimonies to the penetration of the Greek language and civilization into Syria.

If the Jews almost succumbed to this attack by Europe, the Aramaic and Phœnician regions seemed much more certain to surrender their native culture. In Egypt matters were hardly different. Greek became the common written language, often driving out the use of Coptic even in districts remote from Alexandria, and relegating the hieroglyphic and hieratic writing to religious and official texts cherished by the priesthood. In Asia Minor the Hellenic triumph was far more complete. Doubtless in the days of St. Paul there were still remote districts where the rustics gossiped in "the speech of Lycaonia," and probably too in that of Celtic Galatia. But apparently everywhere a traveler who could speak the tongue of Athens could talk freely to every person of importance. The amorphous nature of Levantine paganism made most religious transitions very easy. Egyptian Amon became identified with Zeus. Baal was sometimes called Helios and sometimes Apollo; and the Phrygian Cybele was promptly assimilated with the venerable Hellenic Rhea, the consort of Kronos.

Rome Assists the Westernizing Process

The coming of Roman supremacy brought not the least setback to this Hellenizing of the Levant. The Roman government frankly accepted Greek civilization as something worthy of protection, and confirmed Greek as an official language (practically on a par with Latin) in about all the provinces east of the Adriatic. A "Secretary for Greek Correspondence" became one of the most important Imperial ministers. The actual situation about 30 A. D. was well exemplified in that superscription which Pilate in bitter irony set

over the cross of Jesus upon Calvary; when the prisoner's alleged crime was recited first in Latin (understood in Jerusalem probably by very few persons outside the procurator's official circle); in Greek, the language which the great majority of all the spectators, Jewish or Gentile, could read and speak; and finally in Hebrew, probably comprehended readily by only a learned minority of the gloating Pharisees or Sadducees. The vernacular of Palestine at this time was of course Aramaic.

In a sentence, when the Roman Empire was at its height, and especially after the rebuilding of Jerusalem by Hadrian as the imperial colony of Ælia Capitolina (135 A. D.), Græco-Roman influence in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor seemed to be transforming the Near East into outwardly "Westernized" lands. But this condition could not last. The general weakening of the Empire after 180 A. D. involved an equal weakening of Western influence in the Levant.

In the third Christian century, while economic and social decay were undermining the Roman Imperial régime, the forces of Orientalism at length obtained what they had lacked for centuries—the support of a strong military power just beyond the Euphrates. As early as the third century B. C., to be sure, the Turanian Parthians had first expelled the Seleukid viceroys from Media, Persia proper, and Babylonia, and then had held the Romans (the successors of the Seleukids) pretty successfully to the west of Mesopotamia. But the Parthians, although their redoubtable horse-archers proved terrible to the legions, were too ill-organized and unscientific seriously to threaten the hold of the Romans upon Syria.[1] It was all that the Parthians could do to thwart the skillfully conceived attempt of Trajan in 114-117 A. D. to make the whole Tigro-Euphrates valley into new imperial provinces. For practical purposes, however, despite Roman punitive expeditions in 163-165, in 195 and in 217 A. D., there was practical equilibrium between East and West along

[1] The Parthians struck coins with Greek legends. How their princes delighted in a veneer of Greek culture, yet underneath were raw Turanians, is proclaimed in the famous story concerning Crassus, the Roman invader of Mesopotamia, who was slain 53 B. C. His head was duly forwarded to the Parthian court at Seleucia. The "Great King," in the course of a marriage-feast, was witnessing a presentation of Euripides' play, "The Bacchai." During the performance the head of Crassus was flung into the court theater. Instantly, amid great applause, Jason, the leading actor, seized the trophy and went through the wild Bacchanal's dance, flourishing the head and chanting appropriate verses from the play. The head was thereupon snatched from him by a Parthian noble who claimed this honor. The King Orodes, filled with joy, made large presents to both the nobleman and to Jason. No other incident could better illustrate the essentially barbaric character of the Parthian power.

the Euphrates from the days of Augustus to those of Alexander Severus. For two and a half centuries the Parthian monarchy appeared indeed extensive and pretentious, but obviously spongy and with its "Great King" often at sore odds with his vassals. Then suddenly came a change which shook all of Nearer Asia. In 226 A. D. the Parthian dominion was utterly destroyed by the revolt of Ardishir the Persian, the founder of the Sassanid or "New Persian" Empire.

The Militant Sassanid Monarchy in Persia (226 to 640 A. D.)

The Sassanids ("Descendants of Sassan") and their people were Aryans, who claimed to be of the same folk who had overshadowed the world in the days of Cyrus and Darius I. They were far more virile, resourceful, and aggressive than the Parthians. Their well-disciplined armies often borrowed the Roman tactics. King and people were violent Zoroastrians, "Fire Worshippers," disciples of one of the worthiest, but also one of the most militant religions sprung out of the East. Soon Ardishir and his successors were the "Kings of Kings" of a vast, lumbering empire extending from the Euphrates substantially to the confines of Bactria and India. They were not rulers who were content for long to let the Romans repose safely to the west of the Euphrates.

This revival of a great aggressive Oriental power came at a moment when the Western world was plunging into grievous difficulties. The Roman army was making and unmaking emperors in chronic mutinies. The Goths and other Germanic barbarians were violating both the Danube and the Rhine frontiers. The imperial fiscal and civil administration was nigh demoralized. This sudden peril from Persia therefore put the western elements in the Levant [2] speedily on the defensive, when in Sapor I (240-271 A. D.) the Orient found one of its most vigorous champions. In 260 A. D. he had the unique glory of taking a Roman Emperor, Valerianus, as his prisoner, and of holding him captive for life, while Persian troops poured into Syria, mastering Antioch, and pressing into Cilicia and Cappadocia. The old Empire of Cyrus seemed on the point of a complete revival.

Sapor was promptly halted, however, though not by legions come

[2] In this book the name "Levant" will be used for the lands on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and especially for those in Asia west of the Euphrates.

out of Italy. After centuries of political eclipse, following first the original Persian and then the Græco-Macedonian conquests, the Semites of Syria were showing signs of political renewal. Their oasis of Palmyra had become a great commercial center and a lordly capital. The local merchant princes, nominally members of the Roman aristocracy but equally proud to be the sheiks of their bold desert riders, were headed by Odenathus, who saw in Persia a threat to his own schemes for Palmyrene aggrandizement. His Arabian cavalry (the same type of fierce warriors whose descendants some day were to lead the hosts of Islam) inflicted humiliating losses on Sapor and chased him over the Euphrates. But this was not a victory for the West. It seemed merely to show that Rome was leaving the Levant to shift for itself. The weak Emperor in Italy, Gallienus (son of the unfortunate Valerianus) actually allowed Odenathus to flaunt the purple of a "colleague" and an "Augustus."

The great Odenathus died in 266 A. D., but his vigorous wife Zenobia promptly proclaimed his sons "Augusti" and arrogantly called herself the "Queen of the East." Syria, Egypt, and much of Asia Minor seemed under her power. Rome she affected to patronize and Persia to defy. For a few years it seemed probable that the Levant was about to resume its virtual independence under new Semitic dynasts seated at Palmyra.

The attempt was premature. A mighty potence still lay in Rome. A truly great Emperor, Aurelianus, having cast out the Barbarians from Italy, set forth for the East to teach a stern lesson to Persian and Palmyrene. In 272 A. D. he routed Zenobia's Saracenic lancers, took Palmyra, and, after a second revolt, reduced that upstart capital to ashes. In Persia Sapor I was dead, and his successors were now delighting the Romans by their civil wars. In 283 A. D. the Emperor Carus conducted an inconclusive punitive expedition up the Tigris almost to Ctesiphon, the Persian capital; but in 297 A. D. the "junior Emperor" Galerius, acting for his puissant superior Diocletian, defeated the "Great King" Narses so decisively that the latter was compelled to cede wide provinces east of the Euphrates, carrying the Roman frontier far into Mesopotamia. By the time Constantinople was founded the Persians, however, had largely recovered from these disasters; and in 363 A. D. the inept Jovianus was compelled to cede back to Sapor II practically all these Mesopotamian conquests.

The Romans retained indeed a few fortresses beyond the Euphrates, but their hold was precarious, and that mighty river was again practically the boundary between the "Nearer East," still under Western domination, and that "More Remote East" where the writ of no Latin- or Greek-speaking potentate ran. More serious still for European statesmen was the consciousness that just beyond the Euphrates stretched a mighty alien monarchy, ready, at the first sign of any Roman preoccupation or weakness, to fling its invading hosts into Syria. This standing fear of the ruin or loss of some of their most valuable provinces, made it nigh impossible to concentrate the full military strength of the Roman Empire against the Visigoths, Franks, Burgundians, and Vandals, when the hour of peril in the West drew nigh. Thanks to the Sassanids the Roman had to meet the Germanic invader with one hand tied behind his back.

Eastern and Western Influences in the Early Church

While the Western control of the Levant was thus being imperiled by Persia, Christianity was extinguishing paganism all the way from Palestine to Britain,—and Christianity in that day was by no means a strictly Western religion.[3] Down to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (70 A. D.) the number of Jews in the primitive Church had probably largely exceeded the number of Gentiles. Later, as the movement waxed stronger, it becomes evident enough that under the guise of discussion of abstruse theology a desperate war was raging within the Church between what may be called the sane intellectualism of the Græco-Romans and the transcendental enthusiasms of the Eastern believers. Græcian reasonableness and Roman legalism soon began to give the Church a body of faith and a solid organization which vastly increased the appeal of the new religion to thoughtful men in the West, and finally to the Emperors themselves. While, however, the predominant type of Christianity was thus becoming Occidentalized, an endless string of "heresies"

[3] The revival of Oriental religions of course was not confined to the spread of Christianity. As the Roman Empire weakened, not a few bizarre pagan cults penetrated westward from the Near East. Examples of these are the worship of the Syro-Phœnician sun-god, Elagabalus, a "Baal" that was enrolled temporarily as the chief deity of the city of Rome itself by the depraved Emperor Bassianus (familiarly known himself from his own god as "Elagabalus") in 219 A. D.; and the more worthy cult of the Persian deity *Mithras* ("The Unconquerable Sun") whose esoteric worship spread very widely through the imperial army, and whose chapels were found in the Roman garrison towns along the Rhine and Danube. Thus when the Empire was shaken and minds were distressed, the East once more undertook to provide the West with religious consolation.

revealed the trend of the Eastern genius. Gnosticism, Montanism, Docetism, and finally (in Semitic North Africa) Donatism, not to mention twenty other vagrant persuasions, were clearly the product of the Oriental tendency to desire to walk by impulse and faith and not by a sight, in a manner very repellent to those Church Fathers trained in the moods of Athens and Rome.

The famous Arian Controversy concerning the nature of Jesus, although it racked the whole Church and afflicted Gaul and Spain, began in the bishopric of Alexandria, between men who, notwithstanding that they argued vehemently in Greek, had ancestors who might well have wrought on the Speaking Memnon. Almost all the other great heresies of the fourth and fifth centuries took rise in the Eastern provinces among men of passionate faith and flighty imagination. In almost every instance the imperial government, supporting the saner types of Christianity acceptable in the West, put its coercive secular power at the disposal of the "Orthodox" prelates, the champions of the great creeds promulgated by the World Councils. Westernism of course easily won the Papacy at Rome; and after some hesitation it won the Patriarchate at Constantinople. Christianity as a world religion thus took on the spirit of Europe and not of Asia.

This was a somewhat dangerous form of victory. When the fellahs of Egypt and the villagers of Syria found the imperial officials enforcing a type of Christianity very unacceptable to local notions, to the hatred which they always felt for the tax-gatherer was now added the hatred they bore to the heretical persecutor. The general triumph of Christianity in the Empire therefore did not really promote the fusion of East with West;—speedily it tended to help split the two further in twain.

Nor were these differences based on mere speculation such as whether Jesus Christ had "one or two souls," or "one or two wills." Very speedily, when the great persecutions ceased in the fourth century, a marked divergence appeared in matters of outward practice. For example, the multiplication of idle hermits in the Nile deserts had relatively few counterparts in the more discriminating West. The worship of saints' relics and the intrusion of fantastical performances which later ages could brand as idolatry, assumed far more offensive forms in Syria and Egypt than in Italy and Gaul. Thus such a bizarre character as "Saint" Simeon Stylites (died 459

A. D.) who for thirty years dwelt on the top of his pillar near Antioch, haranguing the adoring crowds which gathered seventy-two feet below him, was nigh impossible in Western lands where a sagacious Gallic bishop is said to have warned a would-be "pillar-saint," that "Whoso exalteth himself shall be abased!"

So Christianity arising out of the East, in its dominant form took on the spirit of the West. But its Eastern adherents during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries showed less and less desire to follow the bidding of Constantinople and Rome; and Constantinople and Rome themselves were already showing signs of failing to work in harmony. Long before the Mohammedan invasion came to deepen the gulf betwixt the rival civilizations of the East and of the West, the Christian lands of the Levant were threatened with a religious schism which was another danger to their connection with Europe.

Character of the Later Roman Régime at Constantinople

The "East Roman" period of the Christian Empire at Constantinople extended from 395 to 717 A. D. Down to about 635 this Empire usually retained nearly all the lands which it had possessed at its beginning; and its government clearly continued the institutions of Constantine if not of the first Cæsar Augustus. After the fall of the Western Empire in 476 A. D. there was no open rival to the master of Constantinople in his claim (never retracted) to "Universal dominion." For a good part of this period Latin was still at least the preferred official language of the court; and down to after 635 A. D. the chief neighbor of the Empire was its old foe, the Sassanid Persian monarchy. In the seventh century, however, a new and terrible problem was presented the rulers of Constantinople by the appearance of militant Islam. Many provinces were lost. Persia seemed blotted out by the more terrible Saracens. The new perils reached their climax in 717 A. D. when a great military crisis compelled a practical reorganization of the Empire. In the West after 800 there also appeared a rival "Roman Empire," although in the eyes of Constantinople these "Holy Roman" Augusti out of Frankland were hardly more than barbarous pretenders. In any case it is best accordingly for the following period to call this Empire, centered at Constantinople, "Byzantine." Its genuinely "Roman" character has decidedly fallen away.

In 395 A. D. Arcadius, the first sovran of the separate East

Roman Empire, found his dominions provided with all that paraphernalia of centralized despotism which had been worked out by those restless organizers Diocletian and Constantine. The system of great *prefectures,* divided into *dioceses* and these into *provinces,* with their gradations of viceroys and governors supplied the local control for the vast central bureaucracy of clerks, secretaries, and exalted ministers at the imperial court. The court itself, with its multifarious officials for the "Sacred Palace" of the "Sacred Emperor"; the mercenary armies with their hierarchies of commanders; the enormous civil service, and the fiscal system designed to wring dry the unhappy tax-payers; the carefully organized "Senatorial" nobility and the inferior nobility of the "Decurions" or "Curiales," the rigid régime of *status,* whereby the city plebeians and the country *coloni* were held in practical serfage—all these things, inevitably, the East Roman rulers took over from the older régime of the undivided Empire.

The end of the fourth century was of course an age of ostentation, pompous honorifics, ignoble adulation of the great, and unblushing exploitation of the poor. "Liberty," whether in the old Greek or in the Roman sense, had long since vanished. Even the Christian Emperors claimed the autocracy belonging to the Vicars of God. Nevertheless they were far from being conventional Oriental despots, able at whim to summon the executioner. As late as the enactment of the code of Justinian (533 A. D.) the fiction prevailed that the Emperor was only able to make statutes because "the people of Rome have conferred upon him all their authority and power." [Institutes: Bk. I: title 2.] He was supposed to judge strictly according to law and not according to arbitrary desire. New statutes could only be put in force after careful consideration in the "Sacred Consistory" of the Imperial councilors, and a ceremonious signature in purple ink by the "divine hand" of the Emperor, and a countersignature by the important "Quæstor of the Sacred Palace." Not until such elaborate formalities had been dispatched were the judges required to consider their master's desires as law. An Emperor who sat as judge on his own case, or who punished a subject with summary cruelty, could not indeed be himself impeached or directly punished, but he could hardly stifle the general charge of "tyranny," with the inevitable premium thereby set upon successful conspiracy. Even down to the decadence of

the Christian Empire in Constantinople there is evidence that it boasted a reasonably independent judiciary, and gave even to insignificant citizens a legal protection against the grotesque and arbitrary oppression that is a commonplace in most Oriental monarchies. In its governmental and legal genius therefore the East Roman Empire represented the spirit of the Occident, and was a bulwark of Westernism thrust out towards the Levant.

This "Western" character was deepened by the fact that Constantinople had received substantially the same local government as the city of Rome. Each city was ruled by an "Illustrious Præfect" named by the Emperor. The old Republican office of "Consul" still remained a glittering if powerless social ornament for high officials, and one of the two consuls now ordinarily resided in the "New Rome," while his colleague remained in the Old. Constantinople also had received a "Senate," made up of about all of the greater officials there resident, and to it was allowed considerable influence especially in matters of municipal government.[4] There also flaunted themselves "prætors" and "quæstors" whose venerable Latin titles still counted for a little actual authority, but more particularly for the expensive honor of giving elaborate public games over which these pompous dignitaries could preside before an admiring multitude.

Probably from the foundation of the city much more Greek than Latin was heard in Constantinople, but the Italian tongue still retained its hold upon the Danubian provinces. Latin was at least freely used in the palace and barracks, and even the Greek-speaking masses repudiated the suggestion they were anything save "Romans" —the legitimate successors of the mighty *populus* of Latium, even though they boasted themselves not as *Romani* but as *Romaioi,* and with increasing frequency spoke of their *Imperator* as their *Basileus.*

Such, therefore, were some of the characteristics of the East Roman Empire; a bulwark of Westernism overshadowing the Levant, which although weakened and penetrated by Orientalism, did not finally succumb until 1453 A. D.

[4] To become a "Senator" of Constantinople one had ordinarily to be at least enrolled among the ex-consuls; such a favor, however, would be granted by the Emperor to practically every noble who had held a high civil office.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN EMPIRE OF CONSTANTINOPLE; THE EAST ROMAN PERIOD THROUGH JUSTINIAN (395-565 A. D.)

Constantinople under Constant Attack

At Constantinople from 395 A. D. onward the spirit of Imperial Rome may be said to have stood at bay, as in a vast fortress, beating off manifold and deadly attacks. These attacks were of two kinds: (1) from the north, in the form of invasions by Hunnish (Tartar), Gothic (Germanic), and Serbian and Russian (Slavic) Barbarians pressing over the Danube into the Balkan peninsula; (2) from the south and east, first Persian attacks from beyond the Euphrates, and then Saracenic attacks even more dangerous, originally from the Arabian deserts, and next from captured Syria itself.

The first set of these attacks represented the forces of fairly unspoiled barbarism. The second represented the Orient with most of that which is best and worst in the spirit of the East. Christian Constantinople in the main met both of these assaults successfully. Valuable provinces were lost, but not the mighty capital, and presently many of the provinces were regained. But inasmuch as the stress of events isolated the East Romans pretty completely from the civilized Europeans of the West it is not surprising, that, as the cultural connection with Italy, not to mention Gaul, became more and more attenuated, the whole atmosphere of the imperial city became increasingly Oriental. After several centuries had passed assuredly there existed in Constantinople a pageantry and glitter, a tawdriness and filth, an obsequiousness and a pitilessness, which has never possessed the lands of a genuinely Latin civilization. Constantinople was losing most of its Western traits many generations before the Padishah of the Ottomans lorded it in the Seraglio of "Stamboul."

Strength and Weakness of the Christian Empire

Nevertheless not merely the name, but many of the worthier traditions of old Roman imperialism lived on the Bosphorus almost to the end of the Middle Ages. The administration of the Eastern Augusti labored indeed under certain severe handicaps. In the first place it was well said to have been "a government and not a nation"; claiming universal dominion (with certain districts assumed to be merely detached temporarily in a kind of "rebellion"), therefore it could not appeal to its subjects for the passionate national loyalty which has saved many a dynasty of local potentates. "Dwelling forever on the memories of the past, the Roman government of Constantinople never identified itself with any real patriotic feeling of the present," and the history of this Empire is almost purely the annals of its capital. "It is the history of a city, and not the history of a free city." [Freeman.]

When the Emperor was "sacred" and theoretically "the Lord of the World," obviously all initiative in public affairs seemed destined to lodge in his hands. The only duty of the subject apparently was to obey orders and to pay taxes. This lack of public responsibility was accentuated by the almost fanatical anxiety of the Roman government to prevent the mass of its subjects from learning the use of arms. The defense of the Empire for centuries had been entrusted to a decidedly small, but highly disciplined and liberally paid professional army. The battle efficiency of this army was unusually high; but it was often composed of all types of Barbarian mercenaries from Franks and Huns to Arabian camel-archers, and these alien troops were in fact often preferred, as not withdrawing to the barracks those competent citizens who might pay indispensable taxes as farmers or industrialists. The result of centuries of this disarmament was first the development of an almost Chinese dislike for military life on the part of most of the provincials, and then of equally complete helplessness before even a small horde of invaders when the professional army failed to hold the frontiers. The disastrous consequences of this stunting of martial spirit were to afflict the Empire through its entire history. Only absolutely secure states can afford to inculcate pacifism. In 1453 A. D. with the Turks battering the gates of the capital, the last Constantine was unable to mobilize more than a pathetically small fraction of his subjects

to defend their city:—they preferred to crowd the churches looking for a miracle wrought by angels. (See p. 210.)

This element of weakness, however, must not be exaggerated. For over eight centuries the professional armies of the Emperors kept inviolate the capital and usually all the more important provincial centers. The small, but highly disciplined Roman armies time and again turned in confusion the hordes of daring invaders who were full of contempt for the pacific denizens of the Empire. Wealth always commands a certain degree of military power; and, as will be seen, well down through the Middle Ages the lord of the Romaioi was the richest potentate probably on all the earth. The great civil bureaucracy, usually functioning upon very intelligent principles, assured "law and order" in ages when Gaul was rent by the brutal feuds of her Merovingian tyrants, when Britain was desolated by wars betwixt Celt and Saxon, and when Germany was still the name for the realm of pagan barbarians lurking in swamps and forests. In the Eastern Empire still were read Homer, Sophocles, and Plato; while men wrote learned books in good Attic Greek, discussed highly intellectual problems, and were able to erect church edifices which in their beauty of architecture and decoration give them an eternal value along with the worthiest of Doric temples and Gothic cathedrals.

The Emperors from Arcadius to Justinian I (395-527 A. D.)

The Eastern Empire owed its existence and relative prosperity during the troubled fifth century not to the personal deserts of the rulers, but to the high average ability of their officials and to the general excellence of the governmental machine which they were operating.

Arcadius (395-408), the son of the vigorous Theodosius I, was a feeble prince; the tool now of his wife, the irresponsible Frankish princess Eudoxia, now of even more worthless ministers like the eunuch Eutropius. He did nothing effective to check Alaric, the Visigoth who, before this reign ended, was planning his deadly attack upon Honorius, the Western Emperor. Alaric determined to strike West and not East apparently because it was evident already that the imperial power could never really be broken in the Balkan peninsula so long as the impregnable walls of Constantinople gave

the Emperor's forces the opportunity for an endless succession of dangerous sorties.[1]

Arcadius's son, Theodosius II (408-450), was of better personal character, though hardly of greater practical ability than his father. He was, however, favored by a remarkable sister, the mighty princess Pulcheria, a worthy successor to those imperial ladies who had earlier played such a part in Roman history. Pulcheria practically dominated the palace and state. The court under her direction became austere and sanctimonious. If there were few significant reforms, and if barbarians, such as Attila, were kept away more by ignoble subsidies than by vigorous fighting, there were at least fewer of those wholesale invasions and devastations which were tottering the Western Empire. Pulcheria survived her brother. In 450 she contracted a nominal marriage with the elderly Senator Marcianus (450-457) under whose conservative guidance there were few great achievements but few great calamities. After him came Leo I (457-474), a decidedly weaker Emperor, who made futile efforts to send help to the vanishing Cæsars of Italy and to check the wholesale ravages of the Vandal pirates who were now fairly ensconced at Carthage in North Africa. Zeno (474-491), the next ruler, had to see the Western Empire disappear outright and to receive the plaintive deputation from the Senate of Old Rome sent to inform him that, following the deposition of the ill-starred Romulus Augustulus (476), one "Augustus" would suffice for the entire Roman world and that he would do well to entrust the actual government of Italy to a barbarian, the "Patrician" Odoacer. Zeno bowed to the suggestion, but was able somewhat later to dispatch one of the invaders of his own provinces, the Ostrogoth Theodoric, into Italy to overthrow Odoacer, and establish his own power—in a nominal sense as Zeno's authorized deputy.

With Anastasius (491-518) the Eastern Empire at length emerged from many of the perils which had threatened it since the days of Arcadius. The Germanic tribes had followed the lines of least resistance westward; had penetrated Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Africa, and there had settled down. The Huns had come and gone—acting largely as their own destroyers. The Persians had been vexed by

[1] In the days of Theodosius I, Arcadius's father, the Goths had become profoundly impressed by the magnificence of Constantinople and the futility of attacks thereon. After a visit to the new capital, the Visigoth king, Athaneric (according to the familiar story), had marveled, saying "Doubtless the Emperor is a God on earth; and he who raises a hand against him is guilty of impiety."

their own problems and civil wars. What was more important still, the old Græco-Roman civilization, desperately assailed as it had been from all sides, was by no means at the end of its resources. If it had no longer the vigor of youth, it possessed at least the cunning and experience of age. The result was something like a renaissance of the spirit of imperialism. Anastasius, though not a brilliant, was a decidedly firm and capable ruler. Very gradually the army was reorganized so as to contain greater native and fewer barbarian mercenary elements. Not a little too was done by him to improve the financial system and to lighten that terrible burden of taxation which had been crushing the lower classes. When he died in 518 A. D. he left a treasure of 320,000 "pounds" weight of gold (possibly some $65,000,000) and a reliable army of 150,000 men. His successor, the rough but not incompetent commander of the guard, Justinus (518-527 A. D.), continued his successful policies; and in 527 A. D. there reigned in his stead his nephew Justinian, who became one of the most notable figures in the entire history of Constantinople.

Justinian the Great (527-567 A. D.). His Multifarious Activities

Justinian was favored with a decidedly long reign (527-567 A. D.). His father and his imperial uncle had begun life as peasants in the "Illyrian" provinces (Bosnia and Dalmatia) but had risen to high positions in the army ere Justinian himself was born. He had received a thorough education in Roman law and administration, also in theology, and in what was counted the best of literature and secular thought available in the capital. His uncle determined to make him his heir and equipped him carefully for the throne. Justinian may indeed have lacked many desirable qualities, in particular he seems to have been unemotional and fish-like in many of his actions, but he undoubtedly possessed high intellectual capacity and real abilities as a statesman, along with lofty ambitions and a considerable daring in finding the means to fulfill them. It was his chief distinction that in his day the imperial authority was restored across almost half of the lands once lost to the Germanic barbarians of the West; but he had many other claims to occupy lengthy pages in history. To avoid prolixity it is needful to state very compactly the major events which centered around him.

Theodora and the "Nika" Sedition

I. Justinian, while still the heir presumptive, shocked the imperial circle and astonished all Constantinople by wedding a certain Theodora, a woman, who, by common report, was of extremely ignoble origin and herself something very like a variety actress. The moral reputation of this class of women was the worst. This union was the more astonishing because Justinian himself had always been grave, studious, and industrious, a personage whereof it was well said, "No one ever remembered him as being young." He did not make Theodora his mistress, but insisted that she should become his honored consort and be fully recognized as his Empress from the moment he ascended the throne. Whatever Theodora's antecedents, however, she proved herself when "Augusta" to be dignified, intelligent, and fully equal to her dizzy elevation. She was justly charged with many acts of capricious tyranny while she often dominated the councils of her devoted husband, but no provable scandals stained her name after marriage, and it was probably not courtly flattery that ascribed to her a truly imperial beauty. Until her death in 548 A. D. this "star of the Byzantine comic stage" kept her place as an almost equal partner in the labors of the government, although she gave Justinian no children for heirs.

II. Early in this reign there occurred a famous riot in the capital which illustrated a peculiar phase of the life of Constantinople, and incidentally gave occasion for the building of one of the most admirable churches in the world. Deprived of free political institutions, the idle life of the Byzantine populace centered around the great Hippodrome with its races.[2] All the city practically was divided into vehement "factions" of the circus,—the "Blues" and the "Greens." In name these existed solely to support two rival sets of charioteers and jockeys. Practically they had a political importance. In 532 A. D. Justinian himself posed as a patron of the "Blues," which faction also claimed to represent religious opinions more "Orthodox" than their "Green" opponents. In this year as so often the two factions mixed in street fighting, but when the authorities tried to suppress the disturbance, curiously enough the

[2] Christian sentiment, not without difficulty, had suppressed the bloody gladiatorial combats. Many of the horse races, still permitted, were hardly on a higher moral level.

two parties made common cause, probably enraged against the Emperor because of the fiscal exactions of his ministers. This was the famous rebellion known as the *Nika* ("Conquer!") from the watchword of the raging malcontents as they swept through the streets. The imperial garrison was driven back into the palace. Many great public buildings were destroyed. The insurgents seized the Hippodrome and there proclaimed a new Emperor. Within the palace itself there was now panic. Many ministers urged Justinian to flee by water to Asia. The surrender of the capital would probably have cost him dominions and life; but from this flight he was saved by the high words of Theodora: "Every man must die once; and for a sovran death is better than dethronement and exile. Yonder are your ships and the sea; but *I* agree with the old saying that 'Empire is the fairest winding sheet!' "

Thus inspired, the guard-corps made another desperate assault upon the Hippodrome and overpowered the ill-organized insurgents. The "Nika" thus was snuffed out, after Constantinople had been tormented by six days of street fighting and conflagration, and by the slaughter of some 35,000 persons.

The Building of Hagia Sophia and the Codification of the Roman Law

III. During the "Nika" the cathedral of Hagia Sophia had been burned. Justinian immediately mobilized the wealth and artistic talent of his empire for its replacement,—the new Hagia Sophia, which even now, whitewashed and defiled as a Turkish mosque, is possibly the premier ecclesiastical building in the world.[3]

It was, it is true, only the most magnificent of many similar "Byzantine" domed or basilica-shaped buildings which arose in the sixth century, as witness to the vitality and resources of the East Roman culture: but admiration never fails for this creation of the master-architect Anthemius of Tralles. The church was in the form of a Greek cross, 241 feet long by 224 feet broad. Its glory of course rose from its enormous dome, nearly 100 feet in diameter,

[3] It is a futile task to try to decide whether Hagia Sophia was surpassed by the very best of the French Gothic cathedrals such as Reims, Chartres, and Amiens. Assuredly it surpassed about every other Christian temple. San Marco, at Venice, is a worthy imitation, especially in its decorations, but on a decidedly inferior scale.

From the outset this master work of Anthemius was recognized as a wonderful creation. Says the contemporary Agathias, "Even if nothing were said about his buildings, they themselves would suffice to win for him an everlasting glory as long as they shall stand and endure."

pierced by forty windows, and lifting its vast vaulting of masonry to 180 feet above the floor, yet so delicately poised that it was, even as a contemporary [Procopius] well wrote, "hung by a chain of gold from the height of heaven." The wealth of glittering mosaics,—the pageant of the story of Christianity told in what was practically jewel work,—the "splendor of the columns and marbles" so brilliant that "one would think one had come upon a meadow filled with blooming flowers," and finally (alas! long vanished!) the blaze of gold and silver and gems upon the altars, there being concentrated 40,000 pounds weight of silver in the Sanctuary alone, —these are commonplaces in every description of Christian Constantinople.

Justly is Justinian reputed to have cried aloud when this great work was finished: "O Solomon, I have surpassed thee!" If his reign had produced nothing else, he would live through history as the inspirer and patron of the builders of Hagia Sophia.

IV. Destined possibly, nevertheless, to outlast the great church was Justinian's codification of the Roman Law. Within his dominions the great majority of his subjects were now speaking Greek. Latin seemed generally on the defensive even for purely official purposes. But Justinian himself came from Illyria, one of the few remaining provinces where Latin was still the common tongue. He therefore insured that the great legal work undertaken at his direction should be in the language which would be available for men of the West rather than of the East.[4] The Code and Institutes of Justinian therefore represent one of the last triumphs of the strictly *Roman* tradition after its transplanting to the alien shores of the Bosphorus.

Although the world knew it not, the reign of Justinian represented about the last epoch in which a law code compiled at Constantinople would command the study and imitation of the legists of those lands with which lay the future of civilization. Therefore this systematization of the enormous mass of precedents and decisions which by that time constituted the legal groundwork of the Roman Empire was an achievement of permanent significance. It provided a highly scientific system of law that is potent to-day in very many European and even Latin-American countries. The actual work of codification was done on the whole fairly skillfully

[4] Of course official Greek translations were immediately promulgated.

by a commission of experts headed by the astute lawyer Tribonianus. Between 529 and 534 A. D. appeared the series of legal collections and official treaties, which under such names as the *Codex, Pandects, Institutes,* and *Novels* ("New Laws") are grouped in later ages under the name of "Justinian's Code." In the light of history this production was perhaps the most important event in the entire reign of this "pious, prosperous, renowned, victorious, and triumphant, ever august Emperor" (to give him the titles in the preamble of the Institutes); although his Gothic and African wars and the building of Hagia Sophia doubtless seemed to contemporaries far more noteworthy.

Justinian's Persian Wars

V. During the fifth century and well into the sixth relations between Rome and Persia had been, if not always cordial, by no means implacably hostile. The Persian Great Kings were handicapped by the assembling in Bactria and the Trans-Oxus regions, or in those semi-desert lands near the Caspian and Aral seas, of dangerous congeries of nomads sometimes called "Huns" and later becoming more famous as "Turks." As a rule a few skillful Roman emissaries, well provided with gold, could persuade the khans of these slit-eyed Turanians to direct such attacks upon Persia, as to make the Sassanids very glad to leave the Empire alone. But as contemporary to Justinian reigned the mighty Chosroës I ("Khosru"), 531-579 A. D., who simultaneously held the Turanians at arm's length and yet found troops and resources to direct repeated and dangerous attacks upon the Eastern Empire.

Justinian would have been quite able to meet these attacks had he abstained from grandiose projects of reconquering the lost provinces in the West. As it was, the Persians pressed the Empire hard. In Belisarius indeed the Augustus had a general of the first order and his small but highly competent professional armies at first turned back the attacks upon the Roman portion of Mesopotamia and held Syria intact. Peace was made in 533 A. D., leaving the old boundaries substantially intact. When, however, Justinian became fully involved in the reconquest of Italy, Chosroës attacked again with his foes now at a great disadvantage. The hordes of Asiatic horsemen poured over the Euphrates and in 540 A. D. they

seized, after a vain resistance, the great city of Antioch—possibly the largest community in the Empire barring Constantinople.[5]

Most of its wretched inhabitants were dragged away to exile in Babylonia, like the Jews of old. The Persians could not indeed retain this conquest and the other Syrian towns flung off their attacks. Chosroës had in the end to evacuate all his seizures west of the Euphrates, and Belisarius skillfully maneuvered him out of about all of Roman Mesopotamia. The moral shock, nevertheless, caused by the fate of Antioch was a stroke at Roman prestige all through the Near East. This prestige was weakened still further, when, to disengage himself for efforts elsewhere, Justinian made a treaty with Chosroës (545 A. D.) by which the latter granted peace (giving up indeed his few remaining conquests) upon payment of 2000 pounds weight of gold. Antioch never again regained entirely her proud position among Levantine cities. This Persian tempest was a warning of greater hurricanes out of the East that were presently to come.

The Reconquest of Africa and Italy

VI. The most notable outward event of Justinian's reign was of course the reconquest from the Germanic barbarians of North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and, less permanently, of a large fraction of Spain. It was perhaps inevitable, considering the traditions of the Roman government, that the instant the rulers of Constantinople felt strong enough and the alien possessors of Carthage and Old Rome seemed weak enough, the former should make a great effort to recover their lost possessions. The great treasure accumulated by the preceding Emperors, the improved state of the army, the services of a highly capable and enterprising general like Belisarius obviously placed Justinian under a strong temptation to try to end a situation which seemed outrageous and anomalous. It was intolerable to a puissant Augustus that an Ostrogoth should issue edicts to the venerable Rome by the Tiber, and a still more tyrannous Vandal chief to that African land made sacred by such Saints as Cyprian and Augustine.

Nevertheless, speaking in sage retrospect, it was a sorry mistake that the resources of the Eastern Empire should have been exhausted in the reconquests of regions which could not be permanently

[5] Just how the population of Antioch compared with that of Alexandria at this time it is impossible to settle; the two cities seem of about equal magnitude with inferences favoring Antioch.

retained. Justinian could not be expected to realize the fact, but the day for reconstituting the "Roman World" had departed forever. Yet for the nonce these wars he undertook seemed an outward success. The Vandals of North Africa and the Ostrogoths of Italy, like most conquering barbarians, had stood the test of prosperity very poorly. The sons of Theodoric's warriors, and the grandsons of Gaiseric's bands that had seized Carthage, had learned to enjoy Southern wines and had decidedly lost their sires' battle efficiency. Very quickly, therefore, the Vandal kingdom succumbed. In 533 A. D. Belisarius landed in North Africa with barely 15,000 men.[6] Two pitched battles broke the power of Gelimer the Vandalic king, and he was soon a prisoner in New Rome, spared to adorn the conqueror's triumph. Sicily was seized from the Ostrogoths in 535. In Italy the incapable Ostrogoth Witiges met with one disaster after another. Belisarius seized Old Rome in 536 and beat back every attempt to retake it. By 540 Witiges had surrender his own capital, Ravenna, the strong city in the marshes, becoming a second royal prisoner at Justinian's court.

The oppression of the imperial agents in Italy, however, gave the remnants of the Goths their second chance. The Italians found that their Greek-speaking "deliverers" were little to their liking, even if they boasted themselves to be "Romaioi." The Goths also gained a redoubtable leader in the knightly Totila, who from 543 to 553 held the imperial power at bay, and defied all the efforts of Belisarius to reconquer him.[7] At length in 553 Justinian sent out a new general, the elderly eunuch Narses, apparently a very unfit appointment, but really an officer of high capacity. At Tagina in the Apennines he defeated the Goths and slew their chieftain. The barbarians made one last stand near Mount Vesuvius, then capitulated in despair and their remnants quitted Italy for the North forever.

[6] Belisarius was favored by having a biographer and chronicler in his secretary *Procopius* (500-565 A. D.). It is not too much to say that Procopius is the last of those "classical" historians of the premier rank, the earliest whereof is Herodotus. His histories of the "Persian Wars," the "Vandal War" and the "Gothic War" are historical narratives of greater scientific and literary value than anything of like nature that was produced in antiquity at least since the days of Tacitus. He was not without traces of servility towards the powerful and of a desire to rehearse scandalous anecdotes when he felt it safe to do so, but, all things considered, his work is of a very high order, and constitutes another enduring monument of the age of Justinian. After him for generations the historians of Constantinople are usually monks with the unmistakable monkish viewpoint.

[7] It was in 550 A. D. that there occurred the dramatic episode of the seizure of Rome by Totila. Being without confidence that he could hold the place, he deliberately undertook to expel its inhabitants, and (so far as he could) to destroy it. For several weeks Rome was a deserted city, given up to the wolf and the owl.

So Old Rome and New Rome acknowledged again a single master; but in this imperialist reconquest Italy had been harried pitilessly from end to end. "The land," pungently wrote a contemporary, "was reduced to primeval solitude."

These were not Justinian's only annexations. Taking advantage of the civil wars of the Visigoths in Spain in this reign, the imperial generals managed to seize that great and rich district in the south later known as Andalusia; and the imperial garrisons were maintained in this remote province down to about 623 A. D.

Exhaustion and Reaction following Justinian's Reign

Territorially, therefore, Justinian won back about one-half of the defunct Western Empire. The Mediterranean was again practically a Roman lake. Doubtless at Constantinople there were now dreams of completing the reconquest of Spain and of overthrowing the sorely divided Merovingian dynasts in Gaul. But in truth the great Emperor had overstrained the resources of his monarchy. The Gothic revival by Totila had only been possible in the West because funds had lacked to fight simultaneously the Goths and the Persians in the East. The expensive professional army, small though it was for the demands upon it, made insatiable drafts upon the fiscus. The natural result was that all through this reign the exactions of the treasury became ever more vigorous. The Emperor's pretentious court, his extravagant building projects, whereof Hagia Sophia was only the most splendid example, as well probably as the wholesale peculation, by many great officials, added to the intolerable burden. Vainly was it complained that plains were becoming depopulated, farms abandoned, and provinces actually desolated by this policy of excessive imposts, and that "the tax collectors found no more money to collect because there were no more people to pay the tax."

Justinian's glories therefore were a very dubious asset to his Empire. He left it with many recovered provinces but financially exhausted. He had codified the former laws but none of his "Novels" had restored to his subjects a normal economic prosperity. Not inaptly has he been likened to Louis XIV, who dazzled Europe by his apparent power and magnificence, yet left his dominions drained and desolate when at last he passed away.

CHAPTER III

THE CHRISTIAN EMPIRE AT CONSTANTINOPLE; THE PERSIAN AND SARACENIC PERILS (568-717 A. D.)

Great Persian Attack by Chosroës II

Three undistinguished emperors followed Justinian's reign of high pretenses. Justinus II (565-578), Tiberius II (578-582), and Maurice (582-602) were all men of good intentions and fair abilities. They were, however, administering a very exhausted state, and they could do nothing radical to mitigate the economic and social evils now deeply rooted in all their provinces.

In 568 A. D. the Germanic Lombards swept over the Julian Alps into Italy, ensconced themselves in the Po valley and soon dominated two-thirds of the afflicted peninsula, although the imperial "Exarch" managed to retain for his master considerable possessions around Ravenna, Rome, and in the South. In North Africa the Emperor's garrisons succeeded in maintaining themselves in the coastal cities, but the Berber tribes were showing increasing independence and were steadily obliterating those vestiges of the ancient civilization which had been spared by the Vandals. In the Balkan peninsula itself new and uncouth barbarians were crossing the ill-guarded Danube, and penetrating those great regions north of Mount Hæmus which had been already depopulated by the incessant wars and raiding in former generations. The Avars (an uncouth Turanian folk, cousins to the more famous Huns) came in ravaging bands, which sometimes ranged even to the gates of Constantinople, but their real settlement was north of the Danube. The Slavs, who appeared about the same time, seemed equally barbarous, though they were of a genuine Indo-European stock. Not by any one great invasion, but by a steady infiltration they intruded into modern Serbia and Bosnia, where their sons' sons abide to this day. The imperial armies, though sometimes winning victories, could not prevent the virtual loss of these territories north of the

great Balkan range and the Roman settlers gradually fell back towards the protection of the strong fortresses and cities of the South.[1] Constantinople was thus coming into danger of attack in the rear from Europe, however well the great moat of the Bosphorus might seem a bulwark against Asia.

Persia, during this epoch, ceased for a little, to form a danger. Chosroës I had died in 579. His successors had maintained intermittent wars with the Empire, but Chosroës II (589-628) was at length driven from his throne by a native uprising. Maurice wisely received the fugitive and gave him a Roman army, wherewith he recovered his dominions. Chosroës II was a true "King of Kings," arrogant, ambitious, and pitiless, but he ever professed gratitude to Maurice for this service. Therefore, so long as that Emperor reigned there was peace in Mesopotamia; but in 602 Maurice, a very worthy and a very unfortunate ruler, was overthrown and foully murdered by a mutiny of the army. The successful usurper was one Phocas, a cruel and ignorant centurion, whom evil fortune had clothed with the purple. Chosroës at once took up arms to avenge his "father"—and of course to take advantage of the growing confusion of the Empire.

Many times did the "Very Christian Empire of Romaioi" seem close to destruction, ere destruction really came; but seldom much closer than in the two decades following the murder of Maurice. There was a most imminent danger the last "culture-lands" then maintaining something like the Græco-Roman civilization would be overwhelmed by the ravages of the Slavs and Avars in the Balkans and by the more scientific assaults of the Persians on Syria, Egypt, and Asia Minor.

In 602 A. D. the Eastern Empire labored under many inherent defects in its society and governmental machinery, but the most obvious evil was this—that owing to the economic decline it was impossible to keep the professional army well paid, and consequently under good discipline, or large enough to fight off the foes of the Empire. The personal cruelties of Phocas (he had burned one prominent general alive), and the absolute breakdown of the taxation system which followed his misrule naturally caused mutiny and disaffection to multiply. For the moment everything played into

[1] At this time disappeared nearly all the provincials (save in Italy and Sicily), who still spoke Latin.

the hands of Chosroës, who for once had the resources of his wide lumbering monarchy pretty completely at its ruler's disposal.

The Persians were also aided by the general disgust of the Roman population at the rapacity of the imperial tax-gatherers, and by the fact that many parts of Syria and Egypt held forms of Christianity which made the provincials denounce the rulers of Constantinople as "persecuting heretics." Phocas reigned till well into 610. By that time Syria had been repeatedly invaded, the same fate next befell Asia Minor (hardly touched by the sword since the days of Julius Cæsar) and in 608 the citizens of Constantinople had gazed upon a wonderful and fearful sight—that of burning villages directly across the Bosphorus where the Iranian cavalry were devastating to the very gates of Chalcedon.

Then for the last time the region which had given to the ancient world Hannibal, Terence, Apuleius, and so many of the "Fathers," builders of the Catholic Church, gave to the now waning classical civilization a notable figure—Heraclius.

Heraclius (610-641): His Struggle with Persia

Heraclius (610-641) was the son of the "Exarch" (viceroy) of Roman Africa. At the summons of an incensed majority of the capital, apparently because his father disposed of a substantially independent fleet and army, he sailed for Constantinople. All responsible elements deserted Phocas upon his arrival. With little fighting Heraclius seized the city and was proclaimed autocrat. Phocas was soon dragged before him in his galley. "Is it *thus* you have governed the Empire?" taunted the conqueror bitterly. "Will you rule any better?" tossed back the wretch ere the African sailors hewed him in pieces. There was point to Phocas's retort. So desperate was the situation that it was indeed hard to say it could be redeemed even by the most reckless expedients.

In some respects the thirty-one years of Heraclius's reign seemed the real transition period between the Ancient World and the Middle Ages. They begin with western civilization fighting for its life against a Persia which is very like the Persia which threatened Athens at Marathon. The campaigns take one again to the old battlefields of Alexander. The period ends with Persia not defeated but destroyed, and with the Christian Empire struggling on the defensive against that Islam which was to reach "high tide" at the

gates of Vienna in 1683 A. D. and which is still a power and a problem in the world of the twentieth century.

Heraclius's reign falls naturally into three parts: (I) the period of Persian attack and success; (II) the period of Roman counter-attack and victory; (III) the sudden appearance of the Mohammedan Saracens and the final loss of Syria and Egypt.

I. For some years after Heraclius's accession the government seemed paralyzed. Nothing effective could be done to stop Chosroës. His hosts of Iranian horsemen penetrated ever more deeply into Syria and they now seemed coming not merely to ravage but to occupy. In 613 Damascus fell; in 614 Jerusalem, and in the latter case not merely were thousands of the inhabitants put to the sword, but the Holy Places were wantonly desecrated by the fierce Zoroastrians. Along with the unhappy Patriarch, the "Wood of the True Cross," the most sacred relic of Christendom, was actually carried away as a trophy by the blasphemers to Persia.[2]

From every quarter messengers of defeat seemed hastening to Constantinople. The barbarous "Chagan" of the Avars was ravaging the Balkan peninsula. The Lombards were gnawing away the imperial possession in Italy. Egypt (already very disaffected towards the central power) easily submitted itself to the Persians. Chosroës clearly aimed at restoring the old Empire of Darius I and Xerxes with boundaries reaching at least to the Ægean and the Bosphorus. The Persians at length seized Chalcedon outright and only the thin ribbon of salt water and the superior Roman fleet saved the capital from direct attack. Vainly Heraclius humbled himself and sent embassies beseeching tolerable conditions of peace. The arrogant Oriental treated the Roman ambassadors with studied insult, and sent back a reply in the tone of Sennacherib the Assyrian addressing Hezekiah of Judæa:

"The noblest of the gods, the king and master of the whole earth, the son of the great Ahura-Mazda, Chosroës to Heraclius, his vile and insensate slave."

"You say that you trust in God, why then has he not delivered out of my hand Cæsarea, Jerusalem, and Alexandria? Could I not also destroy Constantinople? But submit yourself and I will spare you and your family. . . . Do not deceive yourself with a vain

[2] The "True Cross," on which Christ had suffered, had been recovered (according to general Christian belief) by the Empress Helena, mother to Constantine I, during her visit to Jerusalem about 325 A. D.

hope in that Christ, who was not even able to save himself from death by nailing on the cross by the Jews. If you descend to the depths of the sea, I will stretch out my hand and will seize you, and you will then see me right unwillingly."

After this blast there was nothing left to the remnant of the once mighty Græco-Roman civilization but a war for life or for death.

Heraclius Takes the Offensive

II. The only spot in 620 A. D. which Heraclius firmly held seemed Constantinople, barring possibly some Greek headlands and Ægean lands. In their extremity the idle multitudes of the metropolis at last found their manhood. The loss of the "True Cross" drove pious Christians to desperation. The Church consented to place its great treasures at the disposal of the Emperor, of course as a loan to be duly repaid at the end of the war. The church vessels were melted into coin. The "Blues" and the "Greens" were enrolled and drilled as competent soldiers. The Persians were now posted in Chalcedon, but fortunately all the myriads of Aryan and Turanian riders at Chosroës's call could not provide him with an adequate fleet. Never was sea power a more distinct advantage to one belligerent than it was to the Romans in this mortal struggle. It made vain Choshoës's schemes for seizing his foe's capital. It enabled Heraclius to shift large armies by water routes, and to fight great campaigns far from Constantinople. After an interval evidently spent in zealous preparations, in 622 A. D. Heraclius was at last ready to take the offensive. He left Constantinople after solemn religious ceremonies to wage a holy war against the Infidel. Not unwisely has his expedition been called an essentially "First Crusade."

It is very hard to follow the campaigns of the next six years. In importance, and probably too in romantic incident, they deserve to be told by a Livy or perhaps by a Plutarch; but we actually know of them only from such wooden chroniclers as the monk Theophanes, or the stilted and turgid cantos in praise of Heraclius by the equally wooden poet George of Psidia. The details also are difficult to explain without a very detailed map of Asia Minor, Armenia, and Mesopotamia. Thanks to his sea-power Heraclius was now able to issue from Constantinople and land in Northern Syria, striking at the communications of the Persian army at Chalcedon (as in 622

A. D.) or again by penetrating the Armenian mountains to carry the war across into Media and Babylonia itself. It was a peculiar warfare impossible save in an age when armies were able to cut loose from lines of supply and subsist for many months in an enemy's country. Much of the time the Persian high-general Shahr Barz ("Royal Boar") was in possession of Chalcedon, and was counseling how to get across to Europe at the very moment Heraclius was leading his legions down the Tigris close to the capital cities of Chosroës himself. There were many pitched battles in which the Romans seem usually to have been victorious, but few encounters were decisive. Each side seemed intent upon gnawing into the vitals of the other, and trying to win the victory by that most exhausting of all wars—a war of attrition, while Chosroës was indefatigable in assembling new armies, and in forcing his generals to extreme exertions.

Defeat of the Persians and the Avars

The climax to the struggle really came in 626. In that year Shahr Barz encamped again in Chalcedon. Persian ambassadors crossed to Europe and induced the Chagan of the Avars to lead his yellow-skinned hosts straight on to Constantinople. But the citizens did not lose courage. Their commandant Bonus and the Patriarch Sergius nerved them to a valorous defense, even while the Emperor with the chief mobile army was afar in Armenia and directing its columns into Mesopotamia. The wild Avars dashed vainly on the triple walls of the imperial city. The East Roman galleys promptly sank the crude rafts by which the Persians strove to throw bodies of more disciplined troops across to aid their allies. After heavy losses the Avars therefore lost courage and rolled away northward. The citizens professed to have seen a "Dame of Queenly Aspect," the Holy Virgin herself, traversing the walls and forcing back the enemy. After this trial Constantinople was more manifestly than ever "The City guarded by God."

So it befell that in 627 Heraclius, after wintering in the Caucasus, was able to march southward over the Armenian mountains, and then invaded Assyria. Chosroës had called out a powerful levy of his subjects, under a general Razates, whose master significantly told him, "If you cannot conquer, you can die!" Close to old Nineveh Heraclius met the Infidel, and, riding upon his famous charger

Dorkon "like Alexander on Bucephalus," the Emperor rode down and slew Razates with his own hand. The East Romans were completely victorious. They swept down the Tigris and seized and burned Dastagerd, the magnificent residence city of Chosroës. This disaster broke the power of the aged tyrant over his war-weary subjects. He ordered the execution of Shahr Barz, his best general. The latter evaded destruction and not unnaturally turned rebel. Siroës, the king's eldest son, was lifted to the throne by the Persian nobles and the man who had raged at Heraclius as a "dog" was seized by his own courtiers and children, loaded with chains, and starved to death in the "Castle of Forgetfulness," while Siroës ignominiously besought peace from the Emperor.

Persia had played for great stakes. She had lost. Her armies had been beaten, her most fertile provinces desolated. She was now, as it soon appeared, totally exhausted. Heraclius wisely granted honorable peace to his "dear son" Siroës, but of course exacted the restoration of all the captured territory and of all the Persian trophies, especially of the True Cross, which was presently restored to Jerusalem to the great joy of all Christians.

In 628 A. D. Heraclius returned in triumph to Constantinople. He proclaimed his victory in a pious manifesto, beginning "Oh, be joyful in the Lord!" The high nobles of the Senate declared that he should (as the new savior of Rome) be surnamed "Scipio," and in solemn fact, considering the fearful situation which had existed in 622, he seemed to have plucked back the Empire from the very jaws of destruction. If, therefore, Heraclius had died in 628 he would have taken his place among the most successful rulers of history.

The Saracens Conquer Syria, Egypt, and Africa

III. The Persian War ended in 628. Five years later the cloud of Saracenic invasion rolled northward from the Arabian deserts. In that interval a little had indeed been done to restore the economic life of the Empire, sorely shaken by the moil and toil of the Persian wars; but nothing vital could be accomplished. On the contrary, Heraclius was obliged to tax his subjects unmercifully in order to repay the loan from the Church, which the ecclesiastics were not slow now in demanding. Worse still he undertook with vigor to punish the heresies alleged to be rampant in Syria and Egypt,

and to bring back the Christians of those great provinces to the standards of "Orthodoxy." He also renewed a blundering persecution of the Jews. The result was that when the integrity of the Empire was threatened by the totally unexpected Saracenic attacks of 633 and 634, the very lands which had just been recovered from the Persians were in no mood to fight stoutly to uphold that Roman power which seemed to them so grasping and persecuting.

The outlines of the Mohammedan conquests of Syria and Egypt are traced elsewhere (see pp. 130-33), but in describing them it is impossible easily to account for the extreme lethargy exhibited by Heraclius, the selfsame man who had crushed down the terrible Chosroës. Probably he was by this time in extremely poor health, and worn out by hard campaigning. His victorious army had been only one stage less exhausted and demoralized than the defeated Persians. Financial necessity had forced him to disband many auxiliary forces and to leave many others ill-paid and disaffected. Nevertheless some of the factors in the startling reversal of fortune late in his reign seem beyond prompt explanation.

Syria was practically lost in 637 with the capture of Jerusalem by the Moslems. The Holy City was never again to be in Christian hands until taken by the Crusaders in 1099. Egypt was invaded in 639 and Alexandria, the great stronghold of Græco-Roman power, succumbed late in 641, several months after Heraclius (beset by invasion from abroad and by court faction in the palace) had sunk in his grave. Probably his genius, and genius undeniably it was, had largely burned itself out in those hectic, desperate years when he was on the offensive against Chosroës. Yet his valorous exertions had not been vain. If Syria and Egypt, the lands of the Empire where the influence of the West was weakest, were quickly lost to Islam, Asia Minor, more thoroughly penetrated by Occidentalism, held fast, and the great mountain barrier of the Taurus range became the new frontier, severing the lands of the Moslem Kalifs from the territories still held by the Roman "Basileus." This Taurus frontier became practically fixed by 650 A. D. It did not undergo very vital changes for about three hundred years, by which time the East Romans and not the Saracens were on the offensive.

During the remainder of the seventh century the Empire underwent rapidly those changes which cause us in its next stage to style it "Byzantine." Syria was gone and also Egypt, with the Saracens

working their way into Cilicia and northwest through the Armenian mountains. Persia had been conquered outright and was at the mercy of those lordly Omiad Kalifs whom we shall see holding their splendid court at Damascus (see pp. 138-9). During the century the Saracens gradually fought their way across North Africa, being more hindered by the unwillingness of the native Moors to bend to the kalif and Islam, than by the strength of the imperial garrisons in the coast towns. In 697 the Moslems finally took Carthage, and thereby destroyed the last Roman foothold upon those African lands which so long had figured in classical history.

The Last Stages of the "East Roman" Period (641-717 A. D.)

The historical sources for the story of the Empire in the seventh century are deplorably scanty. One gets the impression of a civilization and society in painful decay. There had been no real recuperation after the exhausting glories of the reign of Justinian. The struggle with the Persians apparently had used up most of the moral as well as the material energies of the ruling classes. Nevertheless the scions of Heraclius were not worthless princes. When the Saracens tried to pass from the old Eastern lands to the more strictly Græcianized districts they met with a stern and effective resistance. From 673 to 677 a Moslem fleet which had penetrated the Sea of Marmora, lay off the island of Cyzicus and endeavored indeed, with some help of a land army, to wear down the resistance of Constantinople itself; but the then Emperor Constantine IV (665-685) fought gallantly and successfully, teaching the bold Islamites that the New Rome was not to be taken by them even though Damascus and Antioch had been. Finally the Saracens, "put to shame by the help of God and the Mother of God, and having lost many fighting men and received great injury, returned in great grief."

Thus for a while the Moslem blasts were stayed; and the Kalifs, for the sake of peace, even paid a subsidy to Constantinople; yet troubles were again gathering in the North. The Avars had rolled away, and settled beyond the Danube, but now in their room appeared another Turanian folk, the Bulgars, wanderers from the great steppes of Russia, and seeking, like so many other roving barbarians, some kind of a dwelling place near to the genial Mediterranean. They could not win this ambition; but they were

able to defeat Constantine IV in battle, to penetrate the Balkan peninsula and make permanent settlement in what is "Bulgaria" unto this day. By 690 A. D. these Turanians were become so firmly lodged that the Emperors had always to reckon on having a warlike, and for a long time a crudely heathen kingdom, planted within two hundred miles of Constantinople. The problem of conserving the Empire thus became more than ever difficult.

As the seventh century ran out there also came to the hard-pressed East Roman state the added calamity of a grossly incompetent despot. Justinian II (685-695) was a brutal and extravagant tyrant, who involved his empire in disastrous wars with the kalifate, and who finally was deposed by the worthier Leontius (695-697). The latter in turn was overthrown by Tiberius III Apsimarius (697-705). Justinian's life, however, had been spared. He had been allowed to dwell among the barbarous Khazars near the Crimean peninsula. There he plotted a return [3] and in 705 with help from the Bulgarian king he retook Constantinople. The treatment he awarded his foes was hideous. Tiberius Apsimarius and Leontius (dragged now from a monastery) were exposed to public gaze in the Hippodrome, Justinian presiding at the games with his feet resting on his prostrate fettered rivals, while the obsequious populace chanted: "Thou hast trodden upon the lion and the basilisk; the lion and the dragon thou hast trampled under feet!" after which the wretched men were beheaded: while to add to the public catastrophe the return of Justinian was followed by a veritable reign of terror. The civil service and army alike were demoralized by the executions and banishments; and in the meantime the Saracens had realized the increasing helplessness of their rivals and were organizing a second and far more elaborate and well-conceived attack upon Constantinople.

In 711 Justinian went down, as might have been expected, in an uprising in the capital followed by a mutiny in his army. His own head fell under the executioner. But he left no firm and well-obeyed successor. From 711 to 717 there reigned three emperors about equally incompetent. All three were the sport of the army which seemed getting completely out of hand. The Saracens were

[3] During this exile occurred the famous episode when Justinian II was caught on the Black Sea in a storm. The crew of his vessel despaired, and urged him to win God's favor by forgiving his enemies. "If I spare *one*, may God drown me here!" the implacable despot replied.

now penetrating into Asia Minor, taking fortresses and making no concealment of their intention to press on to Constantinople. The Kalifs had beheld one province or kingdom after another crumble before them. They had just rejoiced in the conquest of Visigothic Spain. Their armies were overcoming the rajahs of India. They possessed (what the Persians had never possessed) a powerful navy that would enable them to assault the Christian capital from all sides.

In some respects, the situation in 717 A. D. was consequently as desperate, or even more desperate, than that of Heraclius a century earlier; but once more the surviving spirit of Rome brought forth a man. In March, 717, Leo the Isaurian, accounted the ablest general in the imperial army, entered Constantinople by the Golden Gate, rode along the High Street and was acclaimed as "Basileus" in Hagia Sophia. In August the great hosts of the Saracen general Moslemah were before his capital.

CHAPTER IV

LEO THE ISAURIAN, DELIVERER OF CONSTANTINOPLE. THE TRANSITION TO THE BYZANTINE PERIOD (717 TO 740 A. D.)

Leo the Isaurian Prepares for the Saracen Attack

In 717 the "City guarded of God" sustained the most momentous siege it ever had to endure until the iniquitous Fourth Crusade.

The Saracens had now reached the third generation since the Prophet. They were well over their first fanatical enthusiasm, but by this time they constituted a great organized power wielding enormous military resources. Their kalif's best general, Moslemah, led 80,000 men across Asia Minor, took Pergamus en route, crossed the Hellespont at Abydos and on August 15 began drawing his lines of circumvallation along the landward side of Constantinople. On September 1, the Vizier Suleiman appeared with a fleet counted (probably with decided exaggeration) at 1800 vessels. By land and sea this armament perhaps represented the best effort of the entire Omiad kalifate. What follows we can know in main outline, but never in the details one fain would possess. The Christian historians are arid; the Arabians naturally do not love to dwell on a great defeat.

Leo III, "the Isaurian," seems really to have been born rather in Cappadocia than in those rugged Isaurian mountains of Asia Minor, which through many ages were the haunt of an unruly but war-loving population. His parents had migrated to Thrace and were well-to-do peasants. He entered the army; became an imperial *spatharios* (aide-de-camp) and during the tumultuous years preceding the great siege showed himself a pastmaster in dealing with the Saracens whether in warfare or intrigue. Taken in the large he comes on the scene as a soldier of fortune of the better type; a considerable mixture of the fox and the lion; able to fight bravely, and, as it turned out, with very clear-cut ideas as to what ought to

be done when the chance came for civil reformation. He had need for all his craft and all his valor.

Leo had used the interval before the Moslems arrived to provision the city, and probably to mobilize as many ships and troops around Constantinople as was practicable. It was well understood that any land assaults upon the great fortifications completed by Theodosius were likely to fail. The capital was most vulnerable from the water front; and of course it could be starved out by a prolonged blockade on all sides. The imperial navy was apparently too weak to meet Suleiman's fleet on the open seas, but the actual margin of naval superiority was not very heavily on the side of the Orientals. Behind the great chain and booms which closed the entrance to the Golden Horn, the Christian galleys rode secure, ready for a lightning stroke upon the foe as his great armament plied up the Bosphorus, the strong current whereof made maneuvering difficult for the unversed attackers.

Leo had also at his disposal an engine of warfare which had possibly been used in the earlier siege, but of which the Moslems now endured the full terrors—"Greek fire." The real nature of this incendiary compound is still very debatable. Probably it contained large quantities of petroleum, perhaps admixed with pitch and sulphur. It was not precisely explosive, but it burned with devastating fury on water and ordinarily could only be extinguished by sand. It could be shot in kegs or in the heads of large arrows for attack or defense in sieges; but particularly was it formidable when forced through tubes set on board vessels, and sprinkled upon hostile craft.[1]

The Great Siege of Constantinople and Repulse of the Saracens (717 to 718)

The possession of this device (the manufacture whereof was a state secret) was probably the prime reason why Leo was able to prevent the Saracens from completing their sea blockade. When Suleiman's armada strove to ascend the Bosphorus, Leo (issuing from the Golden Horn) fell on its flank, and the Greek fire accounted for twenty Moslem ships being burned outright, while others were captured and towed into port by the exulting Christians. Suleiman

[1] Expert opinion now is that what rendered Leo's "Greek Fire" superior to many similar inflammable compounds well known to the ancients, was the addition of *quicklime*, which in combination with sulphur and naphtha made a substance with devilish powers of destruction, especially when cast upon water. Tradition attributes its invention to a Syrian scientist, Callinicus.

after this did not dare to divide his fleet by closing the northern end of the Bosphorus. He had to keep at one station, probably in the Sea of Marmora, while the land army in Europe gazed rather impotently upon the frowning fortifications.

The winter that followed was terrible for men of balmy climes, ill prepared for the bleak winds which sweep across the Black Sea from the northern steppes and forests. The snow and frost that year were unprecedented in severity. The besiegers died by companies in their tents, while the defenders lay snug and warm in the well furnished city. But in the spring, though Suleiman was dead, a new Moslem fleet appeared—a strong Egyptian squadron led by the Emir Sofian. With this naval stiffening the attackers at last undertook to close the Bosphorus on the North at the same time that reinforcements arrived for the land army.

The crisis had clearly come in the siege. The Saracens seemed to have completed their blockade, but in their fleet there were unreliable elements. Christian sailors from Egypt deserted to the city, rowing under the walls by night in their pinnaces, with cries of "Long live the Basileus!" Leo promptly utilized the information they gave him as to the precise location of the blockading fleet. The boom across the Golden Horn was opened and at an unexpected moment the imperial squadron dashed forth. The Saracen admirals were decisively defeated. Their forces seemed to have been traitorous or demoralized, and their whole armada was so weakened by the toll taken by the Greek fire that henceforth it could barely stand on the defensive. The Romans were now able to throw troops across the Asiatic shore and there cut to pieces the Moslem corps which had been trying to assist the blockade and to keep in touch with Moslemah.

The course of the siege was now decided. Leo's adroit diplomacy had induced Terbel, king of the Bulgars, to advance by land against the covering forces of the Saracens, and 22,000 of the latter are reported to have been slain in this first battle in which the pagan Bulgarians may be said to have posed as the defenders of European civilization. Thereupon Moslemah raised the siege precipitately. His ships ferried the remainder of his land army back to Asia, and he retreated in haste overland having left, we are told, only 30,000 men when he reached the friendly walls of Tarsus. As for the fleet, it tried to make the way back to Syria, but probably the remaining

ships were now in very bad repair. They were caught in a tempest in the Ægean and all destroyed save ten. Five of these were captured by the Romans, five alone escaped to Syria to tell of one of the greatest disasters which ever befell Islamic forces, and one of the most important happenings in the entire history of the world.

Vast Importance of Leo's Victory

The capture of Constantinople by the Moslems in 717-718 would have had incalculable consequences. The last real stronghold of the classical civilization would have been destroyed at an hour when Papal Rome was almost in the clutches of the barbarous and imperfectly Christianized Lombards; when the Frankish Mayors of the Palace were struggling to establish something like nominal order in the degraded kingdom of the Merovingians, and when Britain was rent between the warring princes of Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria. Whether Christianity in any recognizable form could have survived such a disaster is not clear. Certainly after taking Constantinople the Moslems could easily have mastered the Balkan peninsula; and the conquest of Italy as an easy military proceeding would, under the existing conditions, have been almost inevitable. After that, from every modern standpoint there would have succeeded chaos and black night. What constituted the strength and weakness of Saracenic civilization is discussed elsewhere (see pp. 160 ff.); but it goes without saying that modern Europe and America as we know them would be impossible under the Koran.

Fourteen years later was to come that other great disaster to the Moslems at Tours in Frankland. Here, too, as will be seen, there would have been a crippling disaster if Christendom had lost; but the blunt opinion may be offered that the victory of Leo the Isaurian was more important than that of Charles Martel, both in respect to the chances of retrieving a disaster, and to the respective consequences of the destruction in that age of "Byzantine" or of Frankish civilization.

Leo the Isaurian (717-740 A. D.) was more happy than Heraclius. He reigned many years after his victory with increasing glory and prosperity. A spectacular warrior he was not. Probably the task of repulsing Moslemah left his armies decimated and his treasury empty. He could attempt no ambitious counter stroke. But the Saracens had received their lesson. The New Rome was never to

become Arabian. Henceforth the Christians held firmly to the Taurus frontier between Asia Minor and Cilicia, and although for two hundred years thereafter the Moslems made fairly frequent and sometimes devastating raids into Asia Minor, while their foes retaliated in Syria and Mesopotamia, the military results were not important. The two empires were constrained to settle down and to face one another, usually in terms of bickering hostility, but each conscious that it could not hope to destroy its rival.

The New "Byzantine" System of the Reorganized Empire

Having shown himself an exceedingly competent soldier, Leo now proved himself an equally competent statesman.[2] Doubtless he had able helpers, and the glory for giving to the Christian Levant a new lease of vigorous life under a strong and intelligent government should be properly distributed; but so completely now at Constantinople was the power lodged in the hands of the sovran that the credit to Leo is undeniable. Already since the days of Heraclius the "Græcianizing" of the state was proceeding apace. The loss of Syria and Egypt of course weakened the ultra-Oriental influences in the administration; that of Africa took away a province that was nominally Latinized. The hold of the imperial exarch of Ravenna upon Italy every year grew weaker. The former Latin-speaking portions of the Balkan peninsula were in the power of the Slavs or Bulgars. *Only the Greek-speaking provinces held fast;* and here in the lands where after a fashion the tongue of Plato was still talked in the little villages, the old civilization stood at bay. Thanks to the skill of Leo and his successors, this defense was long.

During the seventh and early eighth centuries the Empire rapidly changes itself from "Roman" to "Byzantine." Since about 600 all laws had been promulgated solely in Greek. Since the days of Heraclius Greek began to crowd off Latin on the legends on the coins (usually one of the last of such matters to change). The military names are Hellenized; we hear no longer of "Counts" (*comites*) but of *strategoi*—like the Athenian war-ministers of old. The Emperor is saluted as the *Basileus* (literally merely "King,"

[2] Concerning Leo we have a grievous lack of personal anecdotes and data, except as relating to his career before he became Emperor. Of few mediæval rulers would we more gladly possess contemporary memoirs and biographies. We know him almost exclusively by the bold outlines of his achievements.

but now practically "Great King"),[3] he is *Despot* (Master) and *Autocrator* (autocrat). Another high imperial title is *Isapostolos* ("equal to the Apostles") an honorific uninterpretable to the first Augustus. There are vital reorganizations in the civil administration and in the army. "Romaioi," the subjects of such a government may still have been, but not the "Romani" of grand tradition. Yet there is no contemporary sign betraying the consciousness of any repudiation of the past. It is safe rather to say that after 717 A. D. the Christian Greek element in the Empire becomes even more conspicuous; the ancient Roman element obviously fades. This epoch is therefore "Byzantine."

Restoration of Prosperity in the Empire

It is easier to report the results of battles than of legislation. Leo the Isaurian undertook no epoch-making reforms. It is difficult to name any *one* achievement of his as a civil ruler which was of startling significance; but the undeniable fact stands out that he took over a government apparently tottering on the brink of destruction, and to an astonishing extent gave it new vigor and life. In short, Leo made the *Byzantine* Empire the best governed, most civilized region in the known world—and his Empire continued with increasing outward prosperity for over three hundred years before there appeared an obvious decline.

This is a remarkable achievement. It could only have been possible because the great emperor possessed avidity to work, scrupulous attention for details, reverence for the past, and yet a willingness to build boldly for the future. Thanks indeed to the theological animosities which he awakened, Leo's memory was damned and his soul consigned to hell by the ungrateful monkish chroniclers, but the abiding prosperity of his dominions through a long course of history—often under very mediocre rulers,—cancels all their anathemas.

It is better to explain the work of Leo the Isaurian by stating the institutions and tendencies apparent in the Empire after his time than by ascribing to him too many specific innovations. A modern historian has thus summarized his achievements. "Leo's reforms may be summed up in general by saying that he reorgan-

[3] Foreign potentates did not receive this title which once had been awarded by classical Greek usage to about all monarchs. They were called at Constantinople simply *Reges,* writing the Latin word with Greek letters.

ized the civil and defensive services; reformed police control; reëstablished the rule of law and order; reformed the judicial system; reorganized the finances; encouraged commerce and industry; and made a great effort to combat the prevailing barbaric ignorance and superstition by his so-called 'Iconoclastic' policy." [4] Some of these generalizations call for a little expansion.

The New Law Code, the "Ecloga"

I. Justinian's legal system had not been final. The stress of the times had called for a multitude of new regulations; besides the Sixth Century Code was in Latin, and even official translations into Greek were unsatisfactory. Leo caused a new code to be prepared, the *Ecloga,* published in 740 A. D., the last year of his reign. The preamble of the volume is a curious document, breathing the sentiments of "orthodox" Christianity and asserting the freedom of the human will and proclaiming that the law (the "discovery of God") was provided to enable man to understand his duty "to the extent that he should aim at the [righteous] things which provide salvation." The old legalistic atmosphere of Gaius Tribonianus and other juristic experts has completely disappeared. Instead we have the "judgment of Solomon" held up for admiration, and the ideals of Christian virtue are everywhere embedded in the legislation. Thus while Justinian allowed concubinage, Leo specifically ordained that every concubine should be considered a wife, and laid down heavy penalties for any breach of social moralities.

The most important inference from the Ecloga, however, bears on the state of the agricultural population. The *Coloni,* the serfs bound to the soil, somehow disappeared. Instead the emperors apparently rule mainly over free peasants, who are allowed to quit the farms granted to them by the rich proprietors, provided they compensate the latter for losses caused by untimely departure. There were other peasants who lived in village communities upon lands held in common. From either standpoint the state of the small agriculturalists seems to have become vastly superior in the eighth century to that in the sixth. How this fundamental and blessed change came about is not certain. Leo does not claim to have abolished serfdom; but only to have regulated existing conditions. Probably the shock of the Slavic and Saracenic invasions

[4] Foord, "Byzantine Empire," p. 173.

had everywhere dislocated the life of the peasantry, and in many cases had ruined the power of the proprietors over their bondsmen; —but surely in any case this fortunate alteration went far to give new life to the Empire.

The New Military and Provincial System, the "Themes." The Navy.

II. By Leo's day we find clearly the development of the System of "Themes," although traces of it appeared soon after the death of Heraclius. Under the general stress the old provincial system from Diocletian, of a sharp division between civil and military officials, had broken down. The Empire now became split up into districts (*Themes*) which existed at once for peaceful and for warlike purposes. The number of Themes varied as regions were lost or reconquered, but under Leo III there seem to have been seven in Asia Minor and five in Europe, not counting the imperial possessions still held in Italy and Sicily. Each theme was controlled by a *strategos* who had many civil and administrative duties, but who was primarily the commander of a division of imperial troops permanently stationed in the district. The day for the wholesale employment of alien mercenaries was past. Each division seems to have recruited itself steadily in its own region from the native population. The provincials, in other words, were at last permitted in some form to defend themselves, and not simply to submit to their fates as helpless tax-payers. This was a change which in itself probably added many years to the life of the Empire.

These new territorial armies were not, however, levies *en masse*. On the contrary, every effort was made to render the imperial armies so efficient in organization and personnel, that relatively small forces could repel serious invasions. A "theme" when it took the field apparently would seldom exceed 6000 infantry, 5000 cavalry, with about 500 engineers besides other non-combatants. But all these men were professional soldiers, scientifically disciplined. They were supported by a carefully arranged baggage train with intrenching tools, reserve supplies of arrows and other weapons, and with many catapults and other casting engines which made the storming of their camp an almost hopeless business even for a very superior army. The infantry comprised archers, slingers,

and heavy-armed spearmen,—trained to fight in the old phalanx formation. The strength of the Byzantine armies lay, however, in the magnificent mailed cavalry—the *cataphracti,* who, clothed in heavy cuirasses, went into battle armed not merely with sword and lance, but also with the bow. They were able to combine both missile and close-quarter weapons in their tactics, and must have been peculiarly efficient in fighting the lightly armed Saracenic raiders who never permitted Asiatic frontiers to slumber for long.

The scientific organization of these armies of "themes," as it was developed in the eighth century, gave the Byzantine Emperors a war machine incomparably superior for defensive purposes to that boasted by any Moslem kalif or Frankish king. The available supply of highly trained soldiers was of course limited. The whole standing force of the Empire at this time seems to have been about 70,000 troops regularly in barracks in Asia Minor. In addition at Constantinople there were always posted some 24,000 men in the various élite guard corps. The other forces in Europe would bring up the total of the imperial armies to about 140,000 [5] and those of a genuine military quality rare in the Middle Ages. Seldom would they be able to operate in armies of more than fifty thousand. This limited size, and the great expense of increasing the standing army forbade the Emperors ordinarily to plan wars of conquest, save when circumstances were unusually favorable; but for holding the existing boundaries they were sufficient and excellent.

It is impossible to estimate the exact proportion of this force which was enlisted within the Empire. Persian and Armenian refugees, Arabic renegades from Islam, and later many types of Slav and Turanian Turkomans always found in the Emperor a liberal paymaster. But until the loss of Asia Minor, after 1071, the backbone of the Byzantine armies seems to have been supplied by the sons of the Empire themselves, the hardy peasants of Cappadocia, Phrygia, and above all by the Isaurian mountaineers.[6] The lower officers seem to have come from landowners "of good birth and private means, whose origin made them respected by the soldiery." The higher officers were supplied by the growing class

[5] These figures are more distinctly traceable to the tenth century, but there is not much reason to think they had varied essentially from the eighth.

[6] There developed, especially in Asia Minor, a system of "Military fiefs"—petty landed estates the holders whereof were bound to serve in the army. These "fiefs," however, were on such a small scale that they never created a true parallel to western feudalism.

of great territorial nobles, who were developing a real landed aristocracy in Asia Minor,—the lordly families of Phokas, Skleros, Maniakes, Diogenes, Botaniates, Dukas, and finally of Komnenos—merely to mention over names which became famous before the disastrous close of the eleventh century. The subjects of the Emperors thus won back for themselves those military virtues almost crushed out in the Levant since the Roman Conquest. The result again prolonged the existence of the Empire.

The Byzantine fleet was doubtless enlarged by Leo III even while he strengthened the theme system. The Saracens seemed no longer able to send forth from Syria and Egypt those vast armadas which had threatened Constantinople. There was, however, plenty of pirate raiding. Crete was to be lost to Moslem freebooters early in the ninth century and only to be regained an hundred years later. Sicily also was taken by Moorish invaders from North Africa also in the ninth century and was never regained for the Empire at all. But the swift dromonds of the imperial navy as a rule controlled the Black Sea, the Ægean and the other Levantine waters as far as Cyprus; [7] and thanks to their crews, recruited from the expert sailor-folk of the Greek islands, and to the deadly fire-tubes, the Emperors disposed of the strongest naval power known in the Middle Ages until the palmy days of Venice. This navy was of course the protectress of a merchant marine and of a peaceful commerce which made Mediæval Constantinople a far richer city than had been ancient Alexandria in its most flourishing decades.

The Abortive Attempt to Reform the Church. Iconoclasm (725-842 A. D.)

III. Leo thus recodified the imperial law, and he had a very material share in developing a new provincial and military system. To him also can safely be credited very many smaller reforms or

[7] Cyprus appears to have fallen several times into the hands of the Saracens, but it was as repeatedly recovered. Late in the ninth century the Moslems took and held it till 965 A. D., when the Empire regained it, to keep until shortly before the Fourth Crusade.

Southern Italy, after having been almost lost by the Byzantines following the establishment of Charlemagne's Empire (800 A. D.), was in a large measure reconquered by the "Macedonian" Emperors, late in the ninth century while the ill-compacted Frankish monarchy was tumbling to pieces. Following the capture of Bari (876 A. D.) large numbers of Greek colonists, slaves, etc., were settled in the new Italian themes. Attacks by the Arabs, Latin powers, etc., were long flung back. Calabria thus became in the tenth century "completely Greek in sentiment, language and manners." This large province of New Rome in the homeland of Old Rome was administered by a governor general, the "Katapan," located at Bari. This Byzantine dominion in Italy was maintained until well into the eleventh century, when it was overthrown by the Norman adventurers who also seized Sicily from the Moslems.

innovations which in the aggregate rendered his subjects secure and prosperous. He undertook in addition to combat what he considered a gross abuse in the Orthodox Church. Here, however, he stirred up many enemies, alienated the already feeble loyalty of the Roman Papacy, and won only a temporary victory in his own empire.

The grasp of the Church and especially of the monks upon the life of Byzantine society can hardly be overestimated. Probably Leo believed the number and wealth of the monastic communities to be excessive, and a menace to the normal secular prosperity of the state; but he chose to attack not the withdrawal of great properties from taxation by this transfer to the privileged ecclesiastical foundations, nor the loss of valuable warriors, industrialists or farmers by the multiplication of monastery inmates, but to strike at an outward evil which seemingly had been the subject of bitter taunts by the Moslem invaders of the Empire.

The worship of holy relics and especially of holy pictures and holy images had reached a point in the Eastern Church where it could fairly be called a scandalous superstition and "idolatry." The stories of pretended miracles wrought by statues of the Virgin and apostles were specific and grievous. The higher clergy seem to have been deplorably indifferent to these "vain beliefs" of the uneducated; but many intelligent laymen were scandalized, and especially, it would seem, were the leaders of the rehabilitated army. Leo shared this indignation and his son and heir, Constantine (presently Constantine V, who reigned 740 to 777 A. D.), was even more vigorous in his denunciations.

In 725 A. D. Leo ordered the removal of all holy images in Constantinople. The pious multitude, incited by the furious monks, broke out in rioting when a venerated Crucifix over the palace-gate was taken down. There was even a revolt in the Ægean of a large part of the navy. But despite priestly anathemas and popular fury Leo persisted in his course, being sustained by the good will and loyalty of the army. In the Balkan Lands and Asia Minor the government thus temporarily put through its drastic policy of "Iconoclasm"—"Image-breaking"—with the accompanying arrest and imprisonment of those pious elements whose protests were too vehement. In Italy, however, where the imperial power was already sorely shaken, the eighth century popes roundly denounced the

Emperor and his officers as being substantially heretics and defied them to execute their "Iconoclastic" edicts: and Leo was filled with too many other cares to punish this defiance in a land where Byzantine influence was already failing. The Iconoclastic policy of the Byzantine Emperors, therefore, was one of the great steps in the final separation of the Eastern and Western Churches, although the final break did not come on these grounds.

For the next hundred years and longer the imperial power was usually held by rulers who were more or less ardent "image-breakers." They were repeatedly able to convene councils of obsequious bishops who would excommunicate "Iconodules" ("slaves-of-images") and admonish the faithful to obey the government. But Iconoclasm, with its attempt somewhat to rationalize the outward forms of Christianity, remained essentially a movement of the upper laity and especially of the army. It was resisted furiously by the monks, who were always the keepers of the consciences of the lower classes; and the efforts of the authorities to punish their critics were usually just severe enough to provide the malcontents with the advertising without the anguish of "martyrdom," although there may have been a few acts of cruelty.

The last iconoclastic Emperor, Theophilus (829-842), spent no little energy in imprisoning and even branding and mutilating the "image-worshipers," but the whole movement which he championed was obviously breaking down because it was a mere reform drastically imposed by authority and had never been insinuated with the slightest graciousness into the convictions of the people. Theophilus's successor, his widow, the regent Theodora, was herself a devout "Iconodula." Within thirty days after her accession to power the holy emblems were again in their places all over Constantinople and the persecuted monks were rejoicing in their victory (842 A. D.).

A curious compromise nevertheless ended this struggle over Iconoclasm. A solemn decree of the Eastern Church forbade the use of sculptured images as lending themselves too easily to "idolatry," but permitted the use of holy *pictures* and mosaics. Even to this day the Eastern and Russian Churches are without those galaxies of stone-wrought saints which adorn the Latin cathedrals, but blaze with the magnificent and often jewel-incrusted ikons, which sometimes receive almost as much groveling veneration as if

they had been the "miracle working" statues which Leo III originally prohibited. The only other lasting effect of Iconoclasm was, as noted, to increase that separation between Eastern and Western Christianity which, for other reasons, was already coming to pass.

CHAPTER V

THE "BYZANTINE" PERIOD OF CHRISTIAN CONSTANTINOPLE (717-1025 A. D.)

The Emperors of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries

Only in a detailed work need one discuss sundry of the individual rulers who followed Leo III. Many of them were able men, but none were great reformers. From 717 onward, for over two hundred years, the main task of a "Byzantine" Emperor seemed, however, to be to hold fast the Taurus frontier against the Saracens, and the Balkan frontiers against the Bulgars, and to maintain the existing prosperity of his subjects without experimenting with new institutions, or running the risks inherent in wars of conquest.

The annals of conservative prosperity under an autocracy seldom make an exciting narrative for later generations. The Isaurian house ran out in 802 A. D. with the deposition of the unnatural Empress Irene, who, after having been regent for her young son Constantine VI (779-797), presently deposed him after he became of age, put out his eyes and reigned in her own right. The absence of a well-formed law of succession,—one of the sorrows of the Roman Empire since the first Augustus—repeatedly wrought injury to the public safety. As a rule a successful emperor could arrange to have his son accepted as co-emperor by the army and by the "Senate" of Constantinople during his own lifetime. On the death of the older ruler the junior Basileus then simply assumed sole power, and the transition was safely made. But repeatedly this method of succession failed. Several times the throne changed hands by means of mere conspiracy, assassination, and usurpation. Several times prominent generals or prominent courtiers were able to get themselves named *Cæsars* (sub-emperors) or actual co-emperors, with every chance then of bloody plottings and civil war between the "fraternal" colleagues. Certain of these sanguinary usurpers, however, themselves proved decidedly competent rulers,

BYZANTINE EMPIRE
850–1050 A.D.
AND ADJACENT SARACEN LANDS
Scale of miles
0 50 100 200 300
Magyars
Danube R.
Patzinaks
Rus
SERBS
(Recovered 950–1025 A.D.)
BULGARS
(Recovered 950–1000 A.D.)
Silistria
Philippopolis
Constantinople
Chalcedon
Trebizond
Naples
Ochrida
Adrianople
Thessalonica
ARMENIA
Manzikert
CALABRIA
Nicaea
Dorylaeum
Amorium
EMPIRE
SICILY
(Saracenic Principality Conquered 827–878 A.D.)
Thebes
BYZANTINE
Iconium
Ephesus
Taurus Mts.
Cilicia
Tarsus
Antioch
Aleppo
Euphrates R.
MESOPOTAMIA
RHODES
CRETE
CYPRUS
(Palmyra)
Nehavend
Bagdad
(Ctesiphon)
Kerbala
Kedesia
Kufa
Damascus
Bosra
ARABIAN DESERT
Alexandria
Jerusalem
KALIFATE
Byzantine Empire about 950 A.D.
Lands Recovered by the Empire between 950 and 1025 A.D.
Moslem Kalifate

and one gains the distinct impression that so perfect was the administrative machinery as organized by Leo, that it was seldom that these palace revolutions disturbed the orderly life of the Empire. The great commerce of Constantinople ceased not even if a new Basileus were suddenly crowned by the patriarch in Hagia Sophia; and amid all vicissitudes the European and Asiatic themes continued to harbor and protect what was probably the most civilized and safeguarded group of humanity in the world of the eighth and ninth centuries.

The Macedonian Dynasty (867-1057 A. D.)

After several unstable reigns the so-called "Amorian" dynasty held power from 820 to 867 A. D. Its last scion, significantly known as "Michael the Drunkard," was done to death by his junior colleague, the Cæsar Basil "the Macedonian." Basil I (867-886 A. D.), whatever his sins, was at least an astute, self-made man, half Macedonian half Armenian by descent, who had risen from an exceedingly low condition partly by his wits and partly by his good fortune. Such antecedents culminating in the assassination of a rival do not seem the requisites for founding a successful dynasty; but the "Macedonian" house which Basil established lasted until 1057 A. D., endeared itself to the army and populace, and finally ended not in a revolution but because the last descendant of the family had died in peaceful old age.

After Basil I, who enjoyed a decidedly successful if not a very noteworthy reign, there was only one of the numerous princes or princesses of this dynasty, Basil II, who rose above estimable mediocrity, but unfortunately the times no longer seemed so perilous as those when Leo III had turned back Moslemah. The Saracens ceased to be a real danger when the power of the Kalifate of Bagdad began to wane following the death of Motasim in 841. The "Commander of the Faithful" for a while had seemed to rule over far wider dominions and more numerous subjects than did the Basileus, but his power was less organized, his viceroys less obedient, his armies less disciplined, and his whole structure of government more spongy. After 900 A. D. indeed the whole Moslem world seemed tending to break up into relatively small local emirates which rendered only lip-service to the Kalifs at Bagdad. The emirs of Northern Syria and Mesopotamia wielded no power that could

enable them to push back the frontier betwixt Orient and Occident along Mount Taurus. They were fortunate if the Christian Basileus did not launch his fine regiments of cataphracti directly against them.

The Wars with the Bulgars and the Rus

What for long saved the Saracens from a dangerous counter attack was the Bulgarian danger constantly threatening Constantinople from the North. The Bulgarians were gradually losing their nomadic Turanian habits, and by contact with Greek representatives, were acquiring a certain veneer of civilization. At length they even adopted the Greek type of Christianity. None of these changes, however, made them unmilitary and contented neighbors. All through the ninth century as the Saracen peril waned the Bulgar peril from the North seemed to increase. In 811 the redoubtable King Krumm defeated and slew the Emperor Nikephoros I and actually made the skull of his victim into a drinking cup to be passed among the Bulgar chieftains at their roaring feasts. The Bulgars were subsequently thrust back and forced into temporary good behavior, but by 900 A. D. they were yet again almost crowding the imperial garrisons out of Thrace and Macedonia, at the same time that their western neighbors (but not friends), the Slavs, were once more filtering, rather than conquering their way, into the depopulated regions of Greece clear down to the Peloponnesus.

An even more uncouth although less continuous form of danger also was not wanting.[1] In 904 an armada of 2000 "vessels" (or rather large boats) containing, it is alleged, 80,000 warriors of Russia—that wide, dim land on the north side of the Black Sea, suddenly appeared before Constantinople, and raged vainly at the great walls, but wrought much havoc in the suburbs before the barbarians were half bribed, half compelled to go away. This was the beginning, however, of an intercourse through missionaries and merchants which was ultimately to render the "People of the Rus," not merely Christian, but fanatically "Orthodox," and to cause them to look upon the New Rome and not the Old as the mother of their civilization. While this slow process was going on, in 941 a high chief, Igor, appeared in the Bosphorus with "sixty thousand

[1] There had been a less formidable Russian raid on Constantinople, as early as 860 A. D. It had been easily repulsed.

warriors," at a moment when the main imperial fleet was in the Ægean and the main army was mobilized in the East. By desperate efforts, nevertheless, fifteen superannuated dromonds in the dockyards were outfitted and thanks to the plentiful use of Greek-fire, for which the Northerners were utterly unprepared, the Russians were decisively defeated. Two-thirds of Igor's "fifteen hundred ships" are alleged to have been sunk, and the Russians were given such a lesson that seldom again did they violate the outskirts of the rich and coveted "Tsargrad" although frequently coming thereafter as peaceful merchants.

Growing Prosperity and Military Glory. Nikephoros Phokas (963-969 A. D.)

From 912 to 958 extended the nominal reign of Constantine VII "Porphyrogenitus." [2] This potentate was himself decidedly irenic and unforceful. He was overshadowed from 919 down to 945 by a more efficient co-Emperor, Romanos I, Lekapenos, who assumed nearly all the burdens of the state. Constantine was, however, no slight literary dabbler. He wrote, or caused to be written, a series of treatises on the condition of the Empire, which are among our best authorities on the whole Byzantine public economy, and especially he prepared an elaborate work on "Court Ceremonials" which throws a peculiar light upon the ponderous, artificial and almost Chinese type of court pageants and ceremonies by which Byzantine policy tried to make the Basileus pass for a god on earth.

This reign, however, did not end in decadence but in an increasing military glory. Many years of good government and consequently of wealth, the improvements in the army, the development of a class of great military nobles who delighted in war, and the increasing evidences of the weakening of the Saracenic states had at last given the Byzantine generals their opportunity.

In Nikephoros Phokas the Empire found a great officer who, first in the service of Constantine VII and his son Romanos II (958-963), and then as co-Emperor to the youthful son of Romanos (Basil II, 963-1025) made himself one of the most redoubtable captains who ever went forth from Constantinople. In 961 he recaptured from the Moslems the island of Crete, a pestilential

[2] "Born-in-the-Porphyry Chamber," where Empresses were expected to bring forth their offspring.

pirates' nest that had afflicted the whole Levant. In 962 he led a victorious raid into northern Syria and even the great city of Aleppo fell temporarily into Byzantine hands and was duly pillaged. The next year, now as co-Emperor (963-969) in his own right, he commenced more systematic and permanent conquests. By 966 Cilicia, a Moslem land for three hundred years, had been restored to the sway of the cross. In 968 he had the glory of retaking Antioch, and of releasing the city "where the disciples were first called Christians" from Infidel bondage.[3] The Saracenic emirs were demoralized and terrified, and seemed helpless to prevent even deeper and more formidable invasions into Syria.

Nikephoros, however, if very popular with the army, had proved too stern a martinet to be popular in the capital. He had suppressed the much desired public shows to save funds for the war budget, had quarreled with the clergy, and had finally quarreled with his wife, the Empress Theophano, widow of Romanos II and mother of the youthful "Macedonian" Emperor, Basil II, Nikephoros's nominal colleague. These elements all were ready to condone the deed of the grim conqueror's nephew, John Zimiskes, a high officer in the army, when, late in 969, he and a band of assassins forced the Emperor's bedchamber and slew the "Terror of the Saracens" with a dozen dagger strokes.

John Zimiskes (969-976 A. D.). The Defeat of Swiatoslav the Russian (971 A. D.)

It was a foul crime, but never truly avenged on John Zimiskes (969-976). Oriental histories abound with potentates who gained power by outrageous means yet partly obliterated the memory of their iniquities by their successful government. Hardly was he planted on his evilly-won throne than John had to meet a severe military ordeal. Swiatoslav, a mighty prince who had united nearly all the tribes of Old Russia under his sway, undertook a general invasion of the Balkan peninsula. Either the Bulgars could do nothing to resist, or they actually made common cause with him against Byzantium, their old enemy. Therefore the host of northern warriors, probably with many Khazars, Patzinaks and other uncouth Turanians mingled with the Slavs, swept down into Thrace even

[3] Antioch was presently recaptured by the Moslems, then again taken by the Byzantines in 976, after which it remained in their hands for about a century.

while the Emperor was hurrying from Asia. The invasion was turned back, however, by his excellent general Skleros, but John at once hastened into the Balkans with a heavy concentration of troops from the Asiatic themes. In 971 he advanced towards the Danube intent on teaching the Slavic barbarians what it meant to violate the dominions of the Christian Basileus.

Swiatoslav's unkempt hosts apparently outnumbered the imperialists, but he and his chiefs were at a terrible disadvantage against enemies who handled their brigades with scientific precision; while the Byzantine fleet prevented the Russians from recrossing the Danube. The result of John's maneuvers was to bring Swiatoslav to bay at Silistria, the fortress city that lies to-day in the debatable zone betwixt Bulgaria and Roumania. Here on July 23, 971, Russian and Byzantine met in a hard-fought battle, which was in its tactics and character very like unto the death-struggle at Hastings nearly a hundred years later. All day long Swiatoslav's tall northern infantry with axe and spear flung back the charges of the cataphracti although grievously harassed by the Byzantine archery. So desperate was the fight that the excited imperialists vowed it was only the personal appearance of St. Theodore that enabled them to turn the furious counter-attacks of the Russians. But at last the Northern squares broke, and the remnants thereof fled back into Silistria. So ended the first, though not the last Russian advance into the Balkan peninsula.

Provisions soon failed Swiatoslav. He was fain to capitulate on honorable terms which allowed him and the survivors of his army to retreat into Russia. After the treaty was ratified the two leaders had an interview,—the Russian standing in a boat on the Danube while the Byzantine sat on horseback amid his glittering guard drawn upon the shore. It is recorded that Swiatoslav was fair-haired, blue-eyed, with great mustachios "floating in the wind," and was "clad in nothing but his white shirt"; a notable contrast to the gorgeously appareled John, a small man "with gay blue eyes and a cheerful smile." So the twain—the champion of the ancient but still virile Græco-Roman imperialism, and the champion of the young Slavdom, repulsed but undaunted, exchanged honorable courtesies. Swiatoslav departed to his own land where the next year his foes, the Patzinaks, slew him; while John returned to hold a magnificent triumph in Constantinople.

In 974, with his hands free now in the Balkans, John directed his power towards the East. His field army swept into Mesopotamia almost to the gates of Bagdad, and the feeble Abbasside Kalif besought a peace which was granted for a heavy indemnity and tribute. The next year the Basileus was sending his moving columns through Syria, taking a ransom out of Damascus and even receiving presents which enabled later chroniclers to boast that he had obtained the submission of Jerusalem.[4] Probably if life had been spared to him, John would have completed the reconquest of Syria, although in view of the impending Turkish invasions of the Near East how long the Empire could have kept such an outlying acquisition is doubtful. In 976, however, John died, broken in health by hard campaigning; and the Saracens received a much desired respite.

Basil II, the "Bulgarian Slayer" (963-1025 A.D.). Bulgaria and Serbia Conquered

Nikephoros Phokas and John Zimiskes had alike held power as merely colleagues of the young "lawful" Basileus, the Macedonian, Basil II. The latter, although not actually thrust aside, had been decidedly overshadowed by his formidable associates. Now he at length could assert himself and reign in person, although for a number of years he was preoccupied by the revolts of sundry great nobles and officials who kept the Empire in such turmoil there was little chance for wars of expansion. Basil, however, was worthy of his military preceptors. His whole mature life was devoted to warfare or preparations for the same. He was reputed to be a man of monkish aceticism and austere morality; but mercy to his enemies was never among his Christian virtues. He conducted several brilliant campaigns in Syria, which strengthened the Byzantine hold upon the northern section of that region, but his main energies went into a mighty effort to make the Basileus truly the master of the country nearest his capital—the Balkan peninsula. This project involved the annihilation of Bulgaria.

The then king of Bulgaria was Samuel, with his stronghold at Ochrida in Macedonia. Samuel was a foeman worthy of Basil's steel. The contest lasted thirty-four years. The Bulgars defended themselves valley by valley and fortress by fortress; they won

[4] He really seems to have come no nearer than the highlands of Galilee.

several considerable successes over the attacking armies, but gradually the Byzantine war-machine, directed by a ruthless and competent leader, wore them down. In 1014 Basil won a crowning victory, and to teach his rival the uselessness of resistance he caused (so the horrid tale runs) all the eyes of his 15,000 prisoners to be put out, saving one eye to one man in an hundred, that he might lead the other wretches home to tell Samuel of their plight. The latter is said to have died of rage and grief after the calamity. His successors could do no better than he. In 1018 Ochrida surrendered and the Bulgarians bowed to the Byzantine yoke. To their west the feebler and less resisting Slavic tribes, the later Serbians, had also been glad to make their peace with the Basileus. From this time till 1186 A. D. the Byzantine frontier ran along the Danube from a point close to Belgrade to the mouth of the great river.

For this bloody conquest Basil II won the savage title of *Bulgaroktonos,* "the Bulgarian-killer." His life had gone into this long hard war. He was now an old man, but still had energy to enlarge the Empire's boundaries towards Armenia. He was putting on harness for a great expedition to drive the Saracens from Sicily when death overtook him.

The passing of Basil II ended the period of conquest. Under his grandfather, Constantine VIII, the Empire had perhaps reckoned some 500,000 square miles in its actual territories and vassal states. In 1025 it embraced at least 650,000 square miles and these seemingly far more securely held. The evidences then presented of permanent power and of the possibilities of even greater expansion proved in fact fallacious; but the splendor, wealth, and general prosperity of Constantinople and its rulers never seemed greater than at the dawn of the second Christian millenium. Before outlining the causes of the fall of the Byzantine Empire, it is accordingly desirable to view its capital in its palmy days.

CHAPTER VI

CHRISTIAN CONSTANTINOPLE ABOUT 1000 A. D. SURVEY OF THE CITY

Vast Size and Magnificence of Constantinople

Around 1000 A. D. Christian Constantinople undoubtedly boasted over 500,000 inhabitants and may well have approximated 1,000,000. It was incomparably the largest city in Christendom, and, since the waning of the splendors of Bagdad, probably surpassed any other in the known world.[1] The population of the territories then governed by the Basileus recently amounted to at least 15,000,000, after centuries of Turkish misrule and devastation. It is fair to assume this figure was considerably exceeded under the happier conditions of nearly a thousand years ago. The Byzantine emperors thus ruled what would pass for a considerable country even in the twentieth century. It represented an enormous population at a time when England probably did not boast 2,000,000 inhabitants.

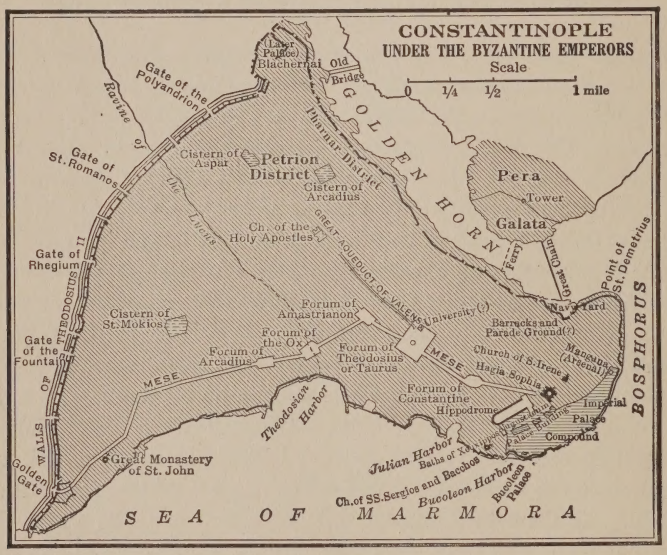
Strangers were lost in turgid eloquence when describing the magnificence of New Rome and the impression which a visit to it produced upon them. Its denizens took this homage as a matter of course. To them their capital was not only "The City guarded by God," it was *"The City"*—as if all other communities in the world were merely secondary towns. A florid tenth century poet overstrained his pedantic Attic vocabulary in praising "The illustrious and venerable city, which possesses the dominion of the world, and which shines by a multitude of marvels, by the splendor of its lofty edifices, the beauty of its elegant churches, the long promenades of its porticoes, and the height of its columns soaring heavenward."

The Great Palace, the Hippodrome, Hagia Sophia, and the Augustæum

The capital had been growing in architectural magnificence ever since the days of Justinian I. If certain emperors had been busy

[1] It is foolish to speculate upon the size at that time of the greatest cities in India and China. There is no reason to think that they exceeded Constantinople.

with wars, others had enjoyed leisure and peace, and had been magnificent builders. At the southeastern angle of the city overlooking the Sea of Marmora, which was dotted with its Isles of the Princes, terrace above terrace there rose the imperial palace; the "sacred" abode of majesty. This was not indeed a building but a "true city within a city." The vast compound of 150 acres had its own secure walls, spacious gardens and pleasure grounds, charming pavilions lost in greenery, great residence buildings wherein were



the marble and mosaic-adorned halls of audience, baths, libraries, churches, prisons, houses for the thousands of civil officials and menials, barracks for the formidable imperial guard—all apparently jumbled together, and arising above the water front in a kind of magnificent glittering disorder. Farther north and along the shore and nearer the Golden Horn was the imperial arsenal of Mangana. Here were kept the formidable war engines which doubled the strength of the Byzantine armies; while from the strong guard tower nearby was stretched the great chain across to the promontory of Galata, to close the Golden Horn in case of danger. Here too were located the imperial dock-yards with many dromonds waiting in ordinary, as well as the ship yards for new vessels.

The heart of the city lay just north and west of the palace compound. Probably no forum of Old Rome exceeded the glories of the Augustæum, the great plaza of Constantinople. The open space was some thousand feet long by three hundred broad; usually sprinkled plentifully with hucksters' booths which were removable on gala occasions. On one flank of this marble-paved forum rose the "royal gate" of the palace; on other sides were the stately "Baths of Zeuxippos," the Senate house where the great dignitaries met with the Emperor in solemn consistory, the august church of Hagia Sophia itself and last, but not least, one of the sides of the Hippodrome. The latter was a veritable Circus Maximus, some 1300 feet long, its race course adorned with an Egyptian obelisk and priceless statues filched from Pagan Hellas. The imperial box therein, the *Kathisma* (actually a small palace in itself, with habitable apartments), rose above vast tiers of marble seats where tens of thousands of Constantinopolitans were wont to cheer their "Green" or "Blue" charioteers, or to join in the majestically intoned acclamations when the Emperor and his magnificent guard-corps appeared in some splendid public ceremony.

Hagia Sophia itself was anything but a strictly ecclesiastical building, or rather the performances of the church had become warp and woof of the regular life of the city. In the cathedral took place the pomps of the councils and coronations. On the great church festivals, here the citizens would gather by thousands for the "offices of the night," when, accompanying a magnificent illumination from the great silver candelabra below, hundreds of lanterns were swung out all around the base of the cupola, until the whole enormous masonry structure seemed floating on a sea of light, and "night made luminous [declares a poet] took on the colors of the rose." At ceremonies like these it was very easy to persuade the more credulous visitors to Hagia Sophia that the angels themselves were descending from heaven to swell the thunderous chanting of the choir or to assist the priests at the altars.

The Mesē (the Great High Street), the Fora, and their Cosmopolitan Multitudes

The Augustæum with its buildings was continued by the great thoroughfare of the Mesē, a stately avenue which led to the Forum of Constantine, a hardly less magnificent square, where rose many

palaces of the magnates with gigantic domes and with walls decorated with bright mosaics or bright placques of metal; or elsewhere the square and avenues were lined with lengthy porticoes of marble adorned with masterpieces of Greek sculpture. A further walk took one to the third forum (Forum of Theodosius), another wide plaza worthy of its peers, and then a continuation of the great street, often called the "Triumphal Way," for the victorious Emperors, ran clear across the metropolis several miles, emerging presently at the magnificent "Golden Gate" in the outer wall, at the southwest angle of the city close to the Sea of Marmora.

Almost as remarkable as the magnificent public and private buildings were the bazaars which attested the wealth and teeming trade of the "Queen City." The bazaars mostly spread from the Augustæum all the way at least to the Forum of Theodosius. Every kind of luxury known in the Middle Ages was purchasable in these booths, many of which were allowed to expand under the lengthy porticoes. Here might be had the sumptuous stuffs of brilliant colors, gold embroideries, all manner of jewel work, exquisitely carved ivories, bronze inlaid with silver, or enamels set with gold; likewise naturally all kinds of humbler wares, viands, animals, raw products, and the like. It is said, however, that the perfumers were suffered to set their shops close to the imperial palace that their sweet odors might rise as incense to the picture of Christ set over the august portals.

In these bazaars, and of course all along the water front and quays of the Golden Horn, surged the cosmopolitan throng which made Constantinople the veritable trysting-spot for the nations. Syrians, Arabs, Russians, Bulgars, South Slavs (Serbs), and, by the eleventh century, Venetians, Genoese, and other Italians were continually in evidence as were also many Jews and all the races of Asia Minor and the Armenian mountains. Long before the Turkish conquest the number of harmless Moslem traders likewise seems to have been so great that the government tolerantly allowed them to erect a mosque.

Such uncouth races as the Khazans and Patzinaks, and other Turanians, were common, while Hindoos, negroes, and even an occasional Chinese probably were not unknown. By the eleventh century also a large fraction of the imperial guard was being enlisted from battle-worthy Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons, powerful blond northerners, attracted to "Micklegaard" by the lure of the Basileus's

gold. Constantinople remained, therefore, a city predominantly "Greek" of course in language and cultural traditions,—but with the constant infusion of alien elements steadily changing the racial character of even the "native" inhabitants,—with the Oriental element decidedly predominating.

Splendid Works of Art Contrasted with Vice and Squalor

To men of elevated tastes the finer parts of the city were a delight through the exhibition everywhere of magnificent objects of ancient sculpture rescued from their abandoned seats and carefully preserved. The Herakles of Lysippos, the great Hera of Samos, and the Ancient Roman bronze of the wolf of Romulus and Remus are mere instances of the original marbles or bronzes which made Constantinople a richer museum of classical art than all the modern galleries. If the Byzantine art itself was unequal to reproducing these triumphs of paganism, it boasted another, and very genuine, form of artistic triumph in the glorious mosaics everywhere visible, especially in the churches. Hagia Sophia was only the first among her beautiful sisters. Constantinople abounded in churches—probably far more numerous than those of Papal Rome—and many such buildings as St. Irene, the Church of the Holy Apostles, and that of SS. Sergios and Bacchos would have been reckoned masterpieces if located anywhere save in the city of the Church of Holy Wisdom.

As a stranger penetrated away from the Augustæum, however, inevitably he would have come to a network of squalid, filthy streets, vile lanes afflicted with either dust clouds or mud, and with all the evidences of a dense and sordid population. By night many parts of Constantinople seem to have been unlighted caverns, given over to wandering dogs and numerous thieves. The dens of iniquity were so numerous and flaunting that a twelfth-century visitor could declare in wrath: "If Constantinople surpasses all other cities in riches, so does it also in vices."

Numerous Monasteries and their Importance. The Majestic Walls

Nevertheless when proceeding from the great squares towards the walls, the squalid plebeian quarters often fell away to give place to the whitewashed walls of the "cities of silence," the numerous monasteries, great establishments within whose compounds were

churches, dormitories, and many green-lined courts and elaborate gardens. Here paced unceasingly the pious folk who had renounced the world—monks with long hair, sober garments and high black hats, or consecrated nuns, often women of noble family, who had (in popular speech) "gone to live with the angels."

The number of the monks and nuns was great, and their influence immense. Many members of aristocracy and imperial family succumbed to the fascination of the monastic life, and without compulsion took the vows. These Orthodox monks, however, were less isolated from the rest of humanity than their brethren in the West. They mingled freely with the laity, often becoming their guides and directors and not infrequently admixing in politics. Their power greatly exceeded that of the secular clergy, and, as the Iconoclastic Emperors discovered, not even the Basileus could defy them.

Continuing finally through this fringe of monastic establishments and industrial quarters one came at last to the great triple wall of Theodosius II. For a stretch of about five miles from the Golden Horn to the Marmora, there rose an enormous mass of ponderous flanking towers and curtain-walls, so arranged that as each of the two outer walls was forced there still upreared another barrier with deeper, wider moat, and loftier, thicker bulwarks; the inner walls being 60 feet high, fronted by a moat 35 feet broad and 25 feet deep. At sight of these impregnable ramparts practically every invader, Goth, Avar, Bulgar, Saracen, and Russian, without wasting his strength, usually had slunk helplessly away. Above one of the gates in this wall was inscribed a prayer: "O Christ, our God, guard this Thy city from all disaster, and from all war. Victoriously break Thou the might of our enemies."

For centuries this prayer prevailed.[2]

Pomp and Ceremonial of the Imperial Court

This city of course gained its importance largely through the fact that it was the capital of a large Empire, but the very retention of that Empire depended not a little upon the industry and trade of Constantinople itself. The Basileus reckoned few other really great

[2] A French writer (Diehl, "Byzance," p. 107) speaks thus of the walls of Mediæval Constantinople: "More imposing than Carcasonne, more poetic than Avignon, more magnificent than Rome, the ancient wall of Theodosius II is one of the marvels of Constantinople, and one of its monuments most full of history."

cities in his dominions, although Thessalonica was decidedly more than a local metropolis and such places as Prusa and Nicæa in Bithynia, Adrianople in Thrace and Thebes in Old Greece were populous communities. The Emperors therefore had few inducements to reside afar from their capital, although they had numerous pleasure palaces and hunting parks in the outskirts. What Paris has been to the life of France, Constantinople to a far greater extent was to the Byzantine Empire.

The magnificent ceremonial of the imperial court was part of a fundamental policy that every means must be used to impress the imaginations alike of subject and foreigner with the sacrosanct character of the Basileus and the futility of resisting his will. Like the Egyptian Pharaohs who, as being "gods," were therefore compelled to pose as infallible and immutable, the sovran of Constantinople was the first slave of his own greatness. Theoretically he was an autocrat. Practically his every movement and word had to comply with "a character of majesty impressing the imagination. His existence was a continual and solemn pageant wherein high officers, nobles, the circus factions, and the populace all played parts as fellow actors." [Bayet.] What the Emperor should wear on a given occasion, what he might say; the acclamations which must be addressed to him, etc., were all matters of strict regulation. "Even public enthusiasm was submitted to formulas; the people could only express their joy according to rules."

He who entered the presence of the sacred Basileus was obliged quite literally to "prostrate himself" before the rigid, enthroned figure, in its garments stiff with jewels and wearing a diadem heavy with lappets of pearls descending upon the shoulders. When the Emperor must needs leave the palace reservation, usually for some religious ceremonial in an outlying church, heralds went forth the day before to warn the inhabitants along the way to sweep their streets and scatter thereon perfumes and flowers, that naught might offend this "divine" sovran of the Romaioi. The arising and dressing, the undressing and retiring at night of the Basileus were great state functions, wherein a whole hierarchy of magnates assisted, as in the similar *levers* of Louis XIV. There was another set of ceremonies when the Emperor visited the Hippodrome. The multitudes of "Blues" and "Greens," each under their official "faction-leaders," were expected to rise and salute him with rhyth-

mical chants, more like the anthems of the church than the spontaneous applause for a popular monarch.

When foreign ambassadors appeared at court, all manner of theatrical display was exhausted to teach the unsophisticated strangers—Bulgars, Russians, or even Latin-speaking Franks—that they were in a palace of marvels, and to appeal to their fears and superstitions. By the throne of the Emperor couched two artificial lions which by mechanism could suddenly arise and roar; there stood likewise an artificial tree whereon were set equally unreal birds that could be made to sing. While the bewildered envoys gazed from their knees upon the Emperor, lo! even upon his throne by some mechanism his costume was changed; he appeared to them in garments and diadem even more brilliant and imposing than before.

Such proceedings are of course easy of ridicule by modern writers and even by the more enlightened ambassadors of a thousand years ago, but they had their undeniable utility so long as the military power of the Empire was strong. This whole "cult of the Basileus," for it was nothing else, must have deepened the impression of many a barbarous embassage that it was not well to exchange bow-shots with the cataphracti.

The Hierarchy of Officials and Dignitaries

What made all this system workable was, of course, that hierarchy of officials, civil and military, who, with all their sonorous titles and pompous insignia, maintained those traditions for efficient administration which had ever been the pride of the Empire. The *Grand Logothete* who had especial direction of the finances and civil bureaus, the *Protovestiary* who was high-master of ceremonies and manager of the palace household, the *Grand Domestic* who in the Emperor's absence commanded the army, the *Protostrator* who was the Emperor's personal squire of state, the *Grand Drogondaries* of the Palace Guard and of the Fleet,—such were the personages at the summit of that hierarchy of dignitaries whom the autocrat delighted to honor. There was also an elaborate judicial system with exalted judges, who examined cases brought to them according to scientific rules of equity at a moment when western litigants were lucky if they did not have to compound for wergeld according to a barbarous code, or settle their troubles by some "ordeal of boiling water," or the "duel by battle." As for the city of Constantinople

itself, it was ruled by an imperial *eparch,* assisted by many bureaus of subordinates.

The "Senate" was indeed a somewhat shadowy body, nothing more probably than a consultative assembly of dignitaries, save when an Emperor really desired moral support and guidance in a serious crisis; or when the absence of a real law of succession produced a dynastic crisis, and the action of the magnates could make or ruin the hopes of a candidate for the throne. But if the Senate as a body seemed feeble, the "Senatorial Order," made up of all the active and retired high officials, and their relatives, plus many of the provincial notables, constituted a real aristocracy, enjoying many social privileges, carefully graded into ranks and categories, and preserving in a very real sense those class distinctions which had been the bane of the decadent Empire of the West. Probably in no other land touching Europe were the social hierarchies so painfully wrought out as in the Byzantine Empire. Under the Basileus was his heir or junior-colleague, the *"Cæsar";* other princes of the blood might vaunt themselves as *"Despots";* while the run of nobles had to be content with such honorifics as *"Patrician," "Protospathiary," "Cubiculary,"* or with those empty Latin echoes of a departed day, *"Count," "Proconsul," "Consul,"* etc.

It has been already stated that the themes were each ruled by a *strategos,* who was at once a civil and military leader. Beneath such a governor was inevitably another hierarchy of provincial officials and magnates, each with their lesser sphere of command and honor, and with booming titles such as *protonotary* and *kastrophylarch* which sometimes meant important duties, sometimes merely an empty decoration.

Efficient Government of the City

Fortunately there was substance as well as sound behind much of this pretentious system. The Byzantine hierarchy long justified its existence by providing for its millions of subjects a more general enforcement of law and order, a surer administration of justice, a more genuine effort to make government exist for the benefit of the governed than in any other Christian or Moslem land during the early Middle Ages, save possibly in the best days of the personal rule of Charlemagne, and in the reigns of one or two of the ablest

Abbasside Kalifs.[3] Constantinople was a city which on its finer streets doubtless impressed visitors by its cleanliness as well as by its magnificence. It had pure water borne upon mighty aqueducts when Paris, London and Aachen drank from filthy wells. It boasted a system of hospitals, orphan asylums and public educational establishments under a great imperial official—the *Grand Orphanotrophos*. It had a university founded by Theodosius II and then reorganized by the enlightened "Cæsar" Bardas in the ninth century. Here existed the best facilities for a training in philosophy and science that were then available upon the entire planet. The study of Plato and Aristotle was pursued with much intelligence as a kind of prelude to that Platonic study which became the glory of Renaissance Italy. A school of law maintained a high standard for the science of jurisprudence; and a medical school had marked influence alike upon the Arabs and upon the West.

Great Wealth of the Emperors and Vast Commerce of Constantinople

But the very power of the imperial government to do these things rested upon its income; and its income largely rested upon the teeming commerce and tireless industry of Constantinople and the other wealthy sections of the Empire. In the twelfth century (when the Empire was already sinking in difficulties) a clever Spanish Jew, Benjamin, of Tudela, visited Constantinople and recorded his admiration and wonder: "Hither come [he wrote] the merchants from all sides,—from Babylonia, from Media, from Persia; from Egypt, from Canaan, from Russia; from Hungary, from Lombardy, from Spain. . . . There is no other city in the world to which I can compare it save only Bagdad." He is in ecstasies over "the richness of Hagia Sophia," and of the imperial palace,[4] "whither they bear the tribute of all Greece. The towers are filled with garments of silk,

[3] Considering general conditions in the Frankish Empire, and the systems of oppression and misrule that are ever present in the East, this qualification is advanced with great hesitancy.

The imperial annals have their full share of the dark deeds and conspiracies common to about every system of despotism. The leaders of the defeated court parties frequently had to pay the penalty by having their eyes put out, instead of being strangled or beheaded as inevitably in Mohammedan monarchies. Often they were simply immured in monasteries after forced vows of monasticism. These events, however exciting in the palace, seldom seem to have interfered with the normal life of the populace, or the orderly and relatively humane administration of justice for non-political personages.

[4] The chief imperial residence was by this time removed to the palace of Blachernai, near the northwest angle of the walls, and no longer facing upon the Marmora as did the old palace.

of purple and of gold. They assert that the tribute merely of the city of Constantinople comes to 20,000 gold pieces per day; such are the imposts upon the shops, the exchanges, and the markets, where payment is made for the merchandise which comes from all sides by sea or by land. The native Greeks are rich in gold and pearls; they are clothed in garments of silk fringed with gold or elaborate embroideries. To see them thus arrayed and mounted on their steeds one would call them 'the veritable children of kings.' "

With every deduction for this enthusiasm the actual riches of Constantinople must have been vast. As late as 1204 Villehardouin the Crusader was forced to write that he and his comrades "could not believe that so rich a city could exist in the world."

Byzantine commerce inevitably centered at the capital, although that of Salonica was not inconsiderable, especially with the Slavic and Bulgar lands; while Thebes and Corinth of course traded in the silks which they themselves manufactured. Imperial officials took pride that "All the World" must come to Constantinople to exchange its products, rather than that the citizens of the Empire should be obliged to visit foreign lands, although the Greek merchant marine probably enjoyed for long the lion's share of the Mediterranean carrying trade. Besides the constant shipping which, except during active hostilities, went on with the Syrian harbors and Alexandria as well as with the ports of Italy and those farther west, several notable caravan routes converged on the capital. There was one route which ended at Trebizond on the Black Sea, bringing products probably from the Far East via Armenia after a portage across the Caspian. From Trebizond to Constantinople the coasting voyage was usually safe and easy. China sent rare silk which could not be manufactured within the Empire.[5] India by the land or sea routes dispatched her jewels and eastern spices. Bagdad and Syria nearer at hand sent costly stuffs, and those precious and venerable commodities, Eastern carpets.[6] From the north of the Black Sea, where Slavic-Russians contended with Turanian Khazars, came supplies of wheat, salt-fish and furs, also the more expensive commodities of caviar and amber. The Balkan lands sent down many agricultural

[5] The silk industry had been pursued in the Empire, especially in Greece with its chief center in Thebes, since the days of Justinian I. Two Christian monks are then alleged to have brought cocoons of the silk-worm home in their hollowed staffs.

[6] The trade in "Babylonish" ("Turkish") carpets is extremely old, and seems traceable back into early Egyptian and Phœnician days. A significant history could be written concerning the ramifications of the commerce in Eastern rugs.

products, especially grains and flax. Probably the western lands, reaching out to the Levant through the merchants of Bari, Amalfi, and Venice, had really the least to offer. They could of course bring certain wines and olive oil, but undoubtedly their chief payments were made in the then lawful and honorable commodity of slaves—kidnaped from every western land from Norway to Apulia.

Industries and Control of Trade in Constantinople

The gains of Constantinople came partly of course in a heavy import and export tax which took its toll from every article bought and sold in the great marts and exchanges lining the plazas and the quays upon the Golden Horn. Mediæval banking was not so insignificant as is sometimes alleged. The Byzantine bankers formed a rich and powerful corporation—something impossible if a huge capital had not been ever passing through their hands. But a large part of the wealth of the Empire came not by way of her middlemen but through her industrialists. The greatest silk manufactures were largely located in Greece, but Constantinople herself boasted her thousands of looms and forges. The old arts and handicrafts of antiquity had still their cunning disciples. Jewel-work of all varieties, enamels and religious ornaments so indispensable in the churches, bronzes, elegant glass work, furs beautifully dyed—in short practically everything that could pass as luxuries in the Middle Ages was manufactured beside the Bosphorus and distributed afar. Besides these works of *vertu* there were produced a great supply of weapons, tools and other metal wares, tasteful or useful, which went to the end of mediæval commerce.

There were indeed grave hindrances to this activity. Mediæval Constantinople has been justly styled "the paradise of monopoly, of privilege, and of protectionism." Industry and trade were minutely regulated. The state fixed prices, wages, terms of sale, and the actual processes of manufacturing. The importation of certain articles, *e.g.*, soap from southern France, was carefully forbidden lest they compete with native products. On the other hand, the export of certain articles was as carefully prohibited. Thus it was a grave offense to send from the Empire garments dyed with that superior purple which was reserved for the imperial family. The government inspector or tax-gatherer had his eye on every

transaction, and the imposts doubtless often ate sorely into the margin of profit.

When all is deducted, however, the commerce and industry of the Byzantines made their monarch dazzlingly rich beside all Christian compeers. Additional tribute came from the thriving agricultural lands of the Empire; the teeming wheatfields of Thrace which fed the capital, or such wealthy regions in Asia Minor as Cappadocia with its huge cattle ranches. The statistics of a thousand years ago are proverbially uncertain affairs, but we cannot dismiss as legendary or even as improbable the statements that about 840 A. D. the treasure of the palace at Constantinople amounted to about $27,000,000 in gold and silver coin or bullion, or that at the death of Basil II this hoard had risen to something close to $40,000,000. What this then implied is better realized by saying that as late as 1431 the annual revenue of the crown of England does not seem to have exceeded $265,000. The purchasing power of this Byzantine treasure was of course at least five times that possessed by a similar amount of coin to-day. Basil II was incomparably the richest monarch of his times.

Intellectual Life in Constantinople

In a sketch like this there is no place for discussion of Byzantine letters and learning. After the crisis of 717 men again gradually found time for peaceful studies and for writing books which were neither legal treatises nor religious polemics. From the ninth century onward there was a true literary renaissance. If there was little originality among the Byzantine commentators and compilers there was much industry and considerable common sense. The Patriarch Photios (820-891 A. D.), who figures so largely in the religious jangling of the ninth century, was a man of true learning who genuinely appreciated the message of the ancients, and whose collections of excerpts from classical writers that are now lost have proved invaluable to modern scholars. In the eleventh century there is met a really distinguished teacher of philosophy and interpreter of ancient poetry—Michael Psellos (1020-1105), the reorganizer of the imperial university, to hear whose lectures infidels are alleged to have come from Islamic countries.

The Greek of most of these historians, commentators and epito-

mizers is usually good.[7] At rare intervals it breaks away from its painfully imitated models of a thousand years earlier, and is written with verve and genuine human feeling. There are traces of a popular poetry and of a true local epic, as in the tale of Digenes Akritas, "warden of the Cilician Marches," who in the tenth century is presented to us as a mighty champion of Christianity against the Infidel along the oft vexed Taurus frontier; who slew impartially Saracen raiders and uncouth dragons; and who last but not least eloped with the fair daughter of a powerful *strategos,* and overcame by his valor her irate father and her seven armed brethren.

The true genius of Byzantium did not, of course, express itself in such productions akin to the Ballad of Chevy Chase. The courtly litterateurs who delighted in imperial favor preferred rather to imitate such august patrons as Leo the Wise (886-912) and Constantine VII (912-958), with their pompous treatises on "Army Tactics," "The Themes," "The Administration of the Empire," etc., or in edifying works like Symeon Metaphrastos's collection of "Lives of the Saints." But imperfect as this literature seems, it shines as a veritable product of sweetness and light contrasted with the writings of the Latin West in those grievous ages following the collapse of the Carolingian Empire, and before the new impetus brought to Catholic Europe by the rise of the new nationalities, and the Clugniac reform of the monasteries and of the Papacy.

High Civilization of Constantinople Compared to Other Regions

In a word, despite much of rigidity, orientalism, despotism, and an attitude of studied conservatism, which made the Romaioi and their rulers always look *backwards* upon glories to be retained or recovered and not forward to high deeds yet to be wrought, Constantinople and its dominions for long remained the one region upon the globe where a man of modern breeding could have found some modicum of those amenities and comforts, that protection to life and limb, and that opportunity to cultivate intellectual pursuits which he would assuredly crave.

[7] The treatises on governmental matters abound undoubtedly in Latin words, somewhat as English legal writings might be sprinkled with uncouth "Law French" expressions, but the actual text is always in Greek and usually is good Greek at that. The Romaioi were far removed indeed from their alleged "ancestors" beside the Tiber.

Here was neither the "organized monarchy" of Feudalism, nor Moslem squalor plus fitful tyranny. Down to the very calamity of the Fourth Crusade, despite many drawbacks,—superstition and barbaric intruders, Constantinople "made upon all who visited her an incalculable impression of wealth and beauty, and her prestige blew abroad into all the known world." Till the Middle Ages waned, men talked of her "as a city of marvels meeting in a brilliancy of gold." On the cold capes of Norway and along the Russian rivers, Northern adventurers dreamed of the incomparable Tsargrad. In Frankish castles the trouvères sang of the wonderful imperial palace. By the Venetian lagoons the merchants counted enviously the income of the august Basileus. So for many generations "The City guarded of God" remained unique in her glory of maintaining the cultural traditions of the Ancient World, until the Newer World could establish worthier traditions of its own.

The death of Basil II (1025) marks the climax of Byzantine prosperity. Some of his successors were men of very feeble stuff. Down to 1057 the formal rulers were usually Basil's elderly nieces Zoe and then Theodora, and the various Emperors were their nominal husbands. The dying out of the Macedonian house was the signal, however, for a desperate struggle for power among the great Asiatic territorial nobles, who had held the high commands in the army. Usurper rapidly followed usurper for a number of years. There was no recognized succession. In the wear and tear of the civil wars the armies became demoralized; the treasury exhausted; and the entire prosperity of the Empire abated. Influences long latent, and checking the great reforms of the eighth century were able now to have fuller scope wherein to undermine the economic prosperity of the Empire. The Byzantine dominions were thus, without undergoing any severe outward blow, in an unfortunate way when in 1071 came a new and terrible invader, and a great military defeat.

In 1071 the Turanian Turks made their first great invasion of Asia Minor. The Empire never recovered from the consequences.

Note on the Separation of the Greek and Latin Churches

Since the schism between the Greek "Orthodox" and the Roman "Catholic" churches must often be mentioned, a jejune statement of the reasons for this momentous break between Eastern and Western Christianity becomes desirable.

I. The primary reason for the schism was undoubtedly the unwillingness of the Greek (Eastern) Churches to accept the primacy of the Roman Pope, the high claims whereof seemed the incarnation of the imperialist spirit of that Latin West, whose pretensions to superior civilization the East had rejected and despised.

II. A powerful secondary reason was the unwillingness of the Eastern Emperors to submit to the claims of an independent, spiritual supremacy by the Papacy, when they themselves were accustomed to intervene drastically in ecclesiastical matters, convene councils, issue edicts defining "Orthodox" faith, and to make and unmake Patriarchs of Constantinople who were their humble dependents in things ecclesiastical.

With these two fundamental factors operating almost since the separation of the Eastern and Western Empires, and with the Iconoclastic movement of the eighth century serving to accent the refusal of the Pope to submit to the Basileus (even if Iconoclasm presently collapsed) secondary causes promptly developed into violent race antipathies and incompatible theologies.

III. The *"Filioque* Controversy" arose in the ninth century to become the grand rock of theological offense. The Greeks charged the Latins with adding the mysterious phrase "Filioque" ("and from the Son") to that clause of the Creed which declares that the Holy Ghost "proceedeth from the Father," thereby altering the fundamental character of the Trinitarian Godhead. The Western Church clung to the new usage. The doctors of the Eastern Church denounced it as a grave "heresy," and to this day they teach that this addition to the Creed makes unity between the two churches impossible.

IV. The bitter dispute in the ninth century between the able and energetic Photios Patriarch of Constantinople (in office 858-867 and again 877-886) and Nicholas I (858-867), one of the most worthy and assertive of the mediæval Popes, added fuel to the flames. Nicholas undertook to sit as judge on the question whether Photios was entitled to succeed Ignatios, who had been deposed as patriarch by the Emperor Michael III. This opened the whole question as to whether a patriarch of Constantinople was subject to the jurisdiction of Rome. Photios vigorously denied this right, and Eastern opinion and, on the whole, the Byzantine government sustained him. Nicholas failed to make the Eastern bishops bow to his authority. Henceforth, although there was no officially proclaimed schism, the coldness between the two churches greatly increased.

V. The multiplication of outward points of divergence now led easily to further discords. The Greeks allowed their parish priests to marry; the Latins required celibacy. The Greeks laid less stress than the Latins upon the confessional; they administered the consecrated wine in the Eucharist to the laity and not merely the bread as in the Western Church; the two rituals, ceremonials, list of saints' days, etc., differed decidedly. Greek, not Latin, was the sacred language of the Levant. Infants were admitted in the East to partake of the Holy Communion. By excitable ecclesiastics, Oriental or Occidental, these issues were soon blown large as major points whereon hung salvation.

The final break came over a point which, taken by itself, was trivial to the

point of absurdity. The Greeks regarded it as outrageous that the Latins should make the holy wafer of unleavened bread. In 1053 the patriarch Michael Kerularios quarreled violently with Pope Leo IX over this issue as well as other matters, arguing that *leavened* bread was required to prove that Christ did not follow the example of the Jews, and that unleavened bread was "unfit to represent the Savior's death." In 1054 Papal legates appeared at Constantinople and, after vain discussions with Michael, entered Hagia Sophia and deposited upon the great altar a document charging him and his party with "most infamous heresies," and anathematized them with all heretics: "Yea, with the devil and his angels unless they do repent." Then, shaking off the dust from his feet, the Latins quitted the church, crying: "Let God look and judge!" Michael of course retaliated with an equally vitriolic excommunication. Despite the vehement efforts made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to accomplish reconciliation, the schism remains unhealed unto this day.

CHAPTER VII

THE "GREEK" PERIOD OF THE EMPIRE OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1071-1203)

The Seljuk Invasion. Battle of Manzikert, 1071 A.D.

About 1060 the Eastern frontiers of the Empire began to be afflicted by the devastating inroads of the Seljuk Turks, a race of Turanian semi-nomads, who had recently accepted Islam and who were now working westward conquering and to conquer. Their character, military efficiency, and the significance of their intrusion into the Near East is discussed elsewhere. (See pp. 167 ff.) The thing immediately evident to the Byzantines was the fact that the Turks were far more formidable invaders than the Saracens had been at any time since the great siege of Constantinople. In 1064 they overran and conquered the then flourishing nation of Armenia, taking the great city of Ani, which had long been one of the bulwarks of Christian civilization towards the East.[1] The prevailing confusion and contention among the ruling classes in the Empire gave the Seljuks their best opportunity. In 1071 their sultan, Alp Arslan, attempted an invasion upon a large scale. With enormous bands of cavalry he penetrated Asia Minor, then probably the most civilized and opulent country in the Levant, devastating far and wide.

The reigning Emperor was a brave soldier, Romanos IV, Diogenes. He was, however, without a perfect title to his throne, and had to fear rivals among his generals. To meet the Seljuk invasion he called out practically all the available professional troops from the European as well as the Asiatic themes and undertook to fling back the Turanians. The Turkish light horsemen were hard to pursue with the heavy-mailed cataphracti, though usually the latter were victorious when their foes were driven to bay. At last Romanos found the main Seljuk horde under Alp Arslan awaiting him at Manzikert on the Armenian frontier.

[1] The greater part of Armenia had been annexed to the Byzantine Empire shortly before the coming of the Seljuks.

Considering the far-reaching results of this battle it is surprising that its story has not figured more prominently in the average "Mediæval history" imposed on Anglo-American readers. Alp Arslan's light cavalry appear to have outnumbered Romanos's heavy troopers. The infantry on both sides were probably negligible. All day the cataphracti and their auxiliaries beat off the Turkish horse-archers, although suffering heavily from the constant pelting with arrows. At last Romanos rashly ordered a charge all along the line. His troops easily scattered the hostile array; they even rode over the sultan's camp, but the Turks had not been broken. The Emperor ordered his men to return to their own camp. It was now dusk. Commands were imperfectly executed. The Turks closed in again the moment they saw that their enemies were in retreat. One Christian division became separated from another. To crown the disaster Andronikos, commander of the reserve, apparently was a traitor. He led his men back to their camp, leaving the Basileus in the lurch. The whole tragedy ended with Romanos being dragged from under his dead horse, and being borne in triumph to the tent of Alp Arslan, who put his foot on the neck of his vanquished foe in token of his own victory.

Calamitous Results of Manzikert. The Ruin of Asia Minor

The battle of Manzikert involved the practical destruction of the entire field army of the Empire, and not merely the captivity of its leader but the death of very many of its most competent officers. The great war machine that had held back the invader for hundreds of years was ruined, beyond genuine reconstruction. During the next ten years the nominal emperors were ill-obeyed nullities, hardly controlling many lands outside the walls of the capital, while the governors, of those provinces that were not being overrun by the Turks, followed their own desires. In 1081 kindly fate at last brought to the purple a man of real ability both in peace and in war—Alexios Komnenos, who was to give the Empire another lease of life and a certain outward glory. But things were never to be as they had been before the Manzikert. The effect of that battle is felt even unto this day, while the Ottoman Turk, cousin and successor to the Seljuk, aggravates with his presence the problems of the Near East.

The loss of a large army and the captivity of an Emperor ought

not to have spelled half-ruin for a healthy, normal nation; but the disaster was one which smote the Byzantines in their most vital spot (Asia Minor) and stirred into activity a number of other evil influences which now combined to pull down the proud Empire of the Romaioi.

I. The Turks in the ten years following 1071, burned their way clear across Asia Minor, almost to within sight of Constantinople. These invaders did not come so much primarily to plunder and appropriate as to destroy. They almost rejoiced in changing rich agricultural lands into devastated cattle pastures. The old territories of Cappadocia, Lycaonia, Galatia and Phrygia seem to have reverted to a kind of desert with a complete subverting of all normal civilized life.[2] The Isaurian highlands, the best recruiting ground for the imperial armies, was lost forever. "Never, probably, even in the thick of the Teutonic invasions of the fifth century, was so much harm done in ten short years as in Asia Minor during the period 1071-1081. *The flourishing themes which had been for so long the core of the East Roman realm had been reduced to mere wastes.* Thirty years after Manzikert, when the armies of the Crusades marched from Nicæa to Tarsus, right across the heart of the ancient Empire, they nearly perished of starvation in a land of briars and ruins." [3]

The loss of Asia Minor thus struck a permanent blow alike to the military and to the economic strength of the Empire. Very few native-born soldiers seem to have been recruited in the European themes. Gone now also were the great landed estates which had supplied the Basileus with so many arrogant but highly efficient officers. By 1081 one of the Seljuk sultans was ensconcing himself in Nicæa, the city of the Holy Creed. The invaders fortunately had no navy. The imperialists were thus able to maintain the Ægean isles, and various coastal districts and headlands in Asia Minor, but probably more than fifty per cent of all the productive possessions of the Empire (excluding of course the capital itself) were

[2] According to some modern authorities the "nomadization" of Asia Minor had begun before the disaster at Manzikert, and this indeed is possible, considering the political demoralization of the Empire following the disappearance of the Macedonian dynasty. Nevertheless the Seljuks were the major cause of an overwhelming calamity. The struggle for the possession of Constantinople by various pretenders following the overthrow of Romanos IV, enabled the Seljuks to advance rapidly and even to claim a certain possession by a "treaty" made with some of the would-be Augusti and Autocrats.

[3] Oman, "Art of War in the Middle Ages," p. 220: a work containing much pertinent and well-digested learning concerning military events in the Levant, and the organization and tactics of the Byzantine armies.

lost and lost under conditions that made them almost worthless if they were recovered.

Military and Economic Perils from the West. The Normans and the Venetians

II. Ten years after the disaster at Manzikert the Balkan peninsula itself was threatened by a new and formidable foe. Norman adventurers, of the same stock that had just conquered England, and members of the selfsame bands that had just conquered southern Italy and Sicily, landed in Epirus intent apparently on fighting their way overland to Constantinople itself. Their leader was the redoubtable Robert Guiscard, the terror alike of Italian and Saracen; his 30,000 men, if not a huge host, probably represented as select an army of western cavaliers as ever rode to war. The new Emperor Alexios Komnenos (1081-1118) had to meet this blast with forces composed of mercenaries from all lands—including even subsidized Turks, and held together by few motives save the love of the autocrat's bezants. The Normans thus were able by hard fighting to win the battle of Durazzo. But Alexios, by Fabian tactics, halted the invaders when they strove to cross Greece into Macedonia. He was actually forcing them back, when, in 1085, Robert Guiscard died, leaving a disturbed inheritance in his realm of the "Two Sicilies." So the Balkan lands were saved; but at the expense of practically allowing the Turks to consolidate themselves in Asia Minor. There were, in addition, somewhat serious wars in the north with Slavs and Patzinaks. All this made the process of recuperation more difficult.

III. The catastrophe of Manzikert came as a greater misfortune because, even without it, Constantinople would have been hit hard in her foreign commerce, the trade in her industrial products, and her merchant shipping. During the early Middle Ages the Greeks had to face formidable economic competition only from the Saracens; now they found themselves compelled to fight for their foreign markets with the rising maritime powers of Pisa, Genoa and above all of Venice.

For several hundred years prior to 1000 A. D. the dwellers on the Adriatic lagoon-islands centering around Rialto, had found it much to their advantage to profess themselves devoted subjects of the Basileus. Constantinople was sufficient remote so that it could not

interfere with the affairs of their "Duke" (*doge*) and councils; the protection of its navy had been useful against Frankish kings and Saracen raiders; and the privilege of trading at Constantinople as welcome guests had been more valuable still. But by 1000 A. D. Venice was waxing strong enough to stand alone. The homage of her Duke to the Basileus became ever more perfunctory. Her shipping and merchants competed keenly with the Greeks in every corner of the Mediterranean. Venetian textile, glass and metal manufactures were likewise developing rapidly. The younger city was far better located than Constantinople for penetrating Europe with her trade. A similar situation, although on the whole less formidable for the Greeks, was rising as to Pisa and Genoa. Even if there had been neither Turkish nor Norman invasions it would, therefore, have been hard for Constantinople to have retained her commercial leadership and wealth under such circumstances.

IV. Finally let it be frankly stated that by the eleventh century the Byzantine Empire showed marked signs of having outlived that "Conservative Reformation" which had given it a new lease of life in the days of Leo the Isaurian. The whole theory of the state made it the defender of an increasingly impossible claim to "universal sovranty"—temporarily questioned merely by insolent Latins and Moslems. No state can expect healthy progress when the ideal of its rulers and more intelligent subjects is not to create some newer, better polity, but simply to recreate as far as possible a power and a civilization which half a millenium earlier had largely slipped away. The rigidity of the despotism had long since destroyed any hope of political progress. The penetration of Orientalism had made it impossible for the eleventh century authors of Attic Greek to revive any real spark of that originality and free spirit which had given Attic Greek its being. The passionate defense of "Orthodoxy"—the slavish adhesion to the supposed precepts and practices of the Fathers of the Early Church,—had deprived Eastern Christianity of genuine quickening powers. Under those circumstances although Christian Constantinople still was the abode of elegance and true culture, wherein lay its future? The dead hand of the past, long heavy upon it, was now threatening its existence.

Revival of the Empire by Alexios Komnenos (1081-1118). The First Crusade

Nevertheless the Empire did not collapse in the eleventh century. Alexios Komnenos was a good warrior and a better diplomatist. Despite the coldness between the Eastern and Western Churches he sent forth a summons to the Papacy for help against the Infidel. Probably he was well informed as to how the Crusading spirit was already stirring among the "barbarous Franks," and he did not call in vain. Doubtless in any case there would have soon been a great expedition from France and the Norman lands to deliver Palestine. In 1095 Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade at Clermont. In 1096 the first disorderly multitudes from France reached Constantinople, were promptly ferried across the Bosphorus by Alexios, and then as promptly massacred by the Seljuks. In 1097 at length there concentrated before the New Rome the great war-bands of the real leaders of the Crusade—Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Toulouse and many of those Norman chiefs who a little earlier had been invading Epirus and Thessaly.

It was a critical moment for Alexios. These indescribably formidable Frankish barons who might, upon their great *destriers*, scatter the Seljuks, were like bewitched children at sight of "the most wonderful city in the world" and its dazzling riches. Would not God be well pleased if they began their holy work by plundering the schismatic, anathematized Greeks before attacking the stiffer Infidels in Asia? Alexios realized the enormous assistance the Franks might render, and also that, if they were seduced into attacking Constantinople, though they might fail on the fortifications, the last chance of giving a blow to the Seljuks was gone. He therefore cajoled, bribed, flattered, and promised, until most of the Crusading lords went through a form of doing homage to him for their prospective conquests; and then he ferried them over to Asia. There was happiness in the palace when the last baron disembarked at Chalcedon. The Franks were of course full of contempt at the "effeminacy" everywhere evident at Constantinople, and were totally unable to understand many of the refinements and luxuries of an over-artificial civilization;—but the First Crusade had not ended in a horrid tragedy among Christians.[4]

[4] The visit of the Crusaders to Constantinople, with the striking and not very friendly juxtaposition of the crude young spirit of the West and the decadent but still venerable institutions of the Græco-Roman East, is vividly portrayed in the pages of Anna Komnena, the Emperor's learned and not unskillful daughter and biographer.

Alexios was correct in his high estimate of the value of the Crusaders' aid. Until the Turks learned that only guerrilla tactics would avail against the mailed knights and their powerful horses, the Franks drove all before them. They besieged Nicasa and pressed it so hard that the Turks surrendered the city to Alexios as being the more merciful foe. The Crusaders next smote Kilidge Arslan, the successor of Alp Arslan, in the great open battle of Dorylæum and temporarily broke his power. When they advanced (amid oft-told adventures and hardships) over Asia Minor to take Antioch and finally Jerusalem (1099), Alexios mustered his forces and recovered large territories which had lapsed to the Turks. Most of old Bithynia, Mysia and Lydia as well as some of the hinterland of Phrygia was thus won back for the Empire.

The Emperor lacked, nevertheless, the means to strike the Seljuks in those interior regions where, after destroying pretty nearly all vistages of the old civilization, they were at length settling down. The sultan of Konieh (Iconium) there remained to bear a more or less uncertain sway over more than half of Asia Minor. The Turks, too, were being continually reënforced by new bands of roving Turanian nomads, pushing their way westward, and dashing themselves on the barriers set by the imperialists. Nevertheless the work of the Crusade was not insignificant. The Moslems were chased back behind the Bithynian hills, over a hundred miles from Constantinople, nor in this quarter did they again become really threatening for nearly two centuries.

The Later Komnenian Emperors. Slow Economic Decline

Alexios Komnenos could thus claim to have done well by his dominions. At his death, if Manzikert had not been avenged, nor the whole of Asia Minor recovered, things assuredly seemed far better in 1118 than in 1081. He deserves to go down into history as a ruler not "great" indeed, nor of spotless character, but not sullied by grievous crimes and one who had wrought successfully for his subjects. Yet the Crusade had really given Constantinople a severe though indirect blow. The conquest of the coast of Syria by the Christians enabled the Italian commercial cities to deal directly with the East. Henceforth the caravan trade from Arabia, Bagdad, Persia, or even India and China was induced to steer its routes towards the Genoese and Venetian factories at Acre and Tyre,

and not towards Constantinople. Likewise this direct contact between Occidentals and Orientals taught the former many important industrial arts. The looms and forges of Europe were soon producing numerous articles which had hitherto been staple exports from Constantinople.

Almost equally disastrous was the fact that the powerful Italian maritime republics were able to coerce the Emperor into granting their merchants exemption from import and export duties in all his harbors. Without destroying his revenue he could not grant similar privileges to his own merchants. The effect of these transactions upon Greek commerce and industry was obviously calamitous. The great element of monopoly which had been the fountain of Byzantine wealth in the tenth century, and which had been threatened in the eleventh, was nearly dried up in the twelfth. For almost the first time in several centuries the Basileus had to struggle with the chronic problem of a falling revenue and a growing deficit.

Nevertheless the riches, splendor, and power of the Empire still appeared magnificent. It is fair to speak of this dominion now, however, as being "Greek." The last Italian possessions were gone. The only parts of Asia Minor that had been recovered were those where the Greek language and social aspect had been of very ancient adoption. The Serbs (South Slavs) and the Bulgars were still rendering the imperial officials a partial obedience.[5] In the Greek lands alone the "Roman" government still stood erect. The period following Manzikert down to the final downfall so clearly betrays the survival of the Hellenic parts of the old civilization merely, that from that time it is proper to speak of the "Greek Empire" and the "Greek Emperor," however tenaciously even now sovran and subjects professed themselves still to be "Romaioi."

The annals of the Empire from the death of Alexios I down to a few years before the catastrophe of 1204 are not exciting. Nothing really was done by any rulers, good or bad, to arrest the forces which were destroying the economic prosperity of the Empire. John II Komnenos (1118-1143) was a sovran of estimable character and favored with considerable energy and success; but he devoted his efforts more to forcing the new Crusading princes of North Syria to become his vassals than to rooting out the Turks in the interior

[5] The Bulgars revolted successfully in 1187 and maintained their autonomy until crushed by the Ottoman Turks about two centuries later.

of Asia Minor. He annexed new coastal districts there, but he did not strike at the vital danger lurking in the hinterland.

His son, Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) was a tumultuous adventure-loving prince who wasted his wealth and his efforts in impossible schemes of conquest. His long reign was one series of avoidable wars mainly with the Christian princes. There was nothing indeed that was cowardly or womanish in this Emperor of the "effeminate" Greeks. He fought with Hungary and won such successes that the king of that turbulent country practically became his vassal. He wrung a nominal form of submission out of the Norman king of Sicily. He compelled the Christian King of Jerusalem to lean on his help to keep his throne against the Infidels. He embroiled himself with Venice, and with the alliance of Genoese and Pisan naval forces he won a really notable victory in 1173 over the Queen of the Adriatic. He even pushed intrigues in Italy, stirred up malcontent potentates and cities against Frederick I Barbarossa, the "Holy Roman Emperor" of the West, and squandered much money helping to rehabilitate the Lombard League, which became such a thorn in the side of Frederick.[6] In short if Manuel had been guided by a consistent policy, and had possessed the resources needful for his ambitious undertakings, he might have gone into history as a fairly successful ruler.

But the two things needful for the "Greek" Empire of the twelfth century this battle-loving Komnenos left undone. He did nothing effective to restore the economic soundness of his Empire—a proceeding demanding abstention from all but the most necessary wars; and he did nothing effective to fight to a conclusion the *one* war which the situation demanded, the war against the Seljuk Turks centered at Iconium. His efforts against this foe—hard to conquer and little likely to supply spectacular rewards for victory, represented merely the residue of his other energies. In 1176 he sustained a serious defeat by the Turks in Phrygia. In 1177 indeed this disaster was avenged by a considerable Greek success and the Seljuk sultan was fain to sue for peace; but nothing had been done to break up the Turanian robbers' nest in Lycaonia. The golden moment for destroying the Turks in Asia Minor, when they were

[6] Frederick Barbarossa was not a ruler to fail to resent such intriguing. Having made his peace with the Italian malcontents, he wrote to Manuel, insolently calling the latter a mere "king" and implying he was a kind of vassal. All the money Manuel had spent in Italy was wasted, and the only real result was to increase the hard feeling between East and West.

weak and when the Christians were still relatively strong, had slipped by.

Manuel had led the life of an irresponsible knight errant.[7] His armies had been composed of alien mercenaries who made insatiable demands on the treasury. Already the imperial taxation had risen to a point ruinous to industry and agriculture alike in Europe and Asia. The fleet had been starved for the benefit of the army and the exceedingly pretentious court. The Italian cities were meantime tightening their commercial monopoly. So matters proceeded from bad to worse.

The Situation at Constantinople about 1200 A. D.
The evil Angeloi

Twenty-four years lapsed from the death of Manuel to the great catastrophe from which the Romaioi never recovered. In 1185 the Komnenian dynasty ran out after a minority reign and a tyrannous usurpation. The throne passed to the family of Angelus whereof Isaac Angelos wore the "purple leggins" of supreme power until 1195, then was deposed, blinded and imprisoned by his unfraternal brother Alexios III (1195-1203). The character of these "two bad Angels" was the same. They were both men addicted to ignoble luxuries and were at the mercy of unworthy favorites. The provinces were exploited with pitiless severity by their governors, the emperors often refusing their officials salaries, and "sending them forth without purse or scrip, like the apostles of old, to make what profit they could by extortion." [Niketas.] Goaded by oppression Bulgaria rose in successful rebellion. A relative of the deposed dynasty, Isaac Komnenos, revolted in Cyprus and set himself up as an independent "Emperor" in that island. To meet the extravagant exigencies of the palace the army was partially disbanded and the remaining troops became disaffected through lack of pay. The navy—once the strongest in the Levant—practically ceased to exist. The Greek Empire had still many provinces; but they were becoming filled with an impoverished sullen population. The great civil administrative machine of officials, bred in traditions leading back to the first Constantine, at length showed signs of breaking down. At the capital the Basileus still maintained a glittering and

[7] The career of Manuel, a restless cavalier rejoicing in forays, personal encounters and tournaments, is a standing refutation of the old charge that the "Greeks of the Lower Empire" were cowardly and bereft of manly virtues.

pretentious court, but every circle thereof was honeycombed by intrigue and shaken by constant conspiracies.

The situation by 1200 A. D. was again almost desperate. Yet it was not quite beyond recovery by a first-class efficient despot. The case was probably no worse than in the years after Manzikert, and not so bad as the mortal crisis of 717 A. D.; but now came the blow—not from the Moslem East but from the Christian West—from which there was no genuine restoration.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CALAMITOUS FOURTH CRUSADE (1203-1204) AND THE GREEK RESTORATION AT CONSTANTINOPLE

The Venetians Divert the Fourth Crusade to Constantinople (1203)

In 1147 the Western armies of the ill-starred Second Crusade, and in 1189 the German army of Frederick Barbarossa in the Third Crusade had been induced to pass by Constantinople without open warfare betwixt Greek and Latin—but only by the most skillful handling had this been accomplished. The Franks charged the Greeks with numerous slippery dealings and with actual intrigues with the Infidel to bring the Crusades to nought. The Greeks regarded the Westerners as cubbish barbarians professing a very doubtful quality of Christianity. Since Jerusalem had remained in Moslem hands since its recapture by Saladin in 1187, early in the thirteenth century a new Crusade was preached in Western Europe, especially in Northern France and Flanders. A considerable body of valorous knights and barons (whereof the titular chief was Count Baldwin of Flanders) was collected for this "Fourth" Crusade. To avoid the long land route this army bargained with the Venetians for shipping to take them to Egypt or Palestine. On arrival at Venice, however, the Crusaders found themselves unable to pay the stipulated sum for their passage. On the other hand, the Venetians, and especially their astute and unscrupulous doge, Enrico Dandolo, seem already to have formed schemes to divert this "Army of the Cross" to selfish and utterly impious ends. They proposed to the Crusaders that in lieu of passage money the army should besiege and take for the Venetians the Adriatic city of Zara which they coveted from the King of Hungary.

Many Crusaders had scruples against attacking a Christian ruler who had done them no hurt; but Dandolo was insidious and importunate. In the winter of 1202-1203 Zara was besieged and duly fell

to Venice: but already a more malific serpent had entered the Crusader's Eden. In their camp had appeared "Young Alexios," the son of the deposed Isaac II, willing to promise inordinate subsidies and vast military assistance if the Frankish warriors would only turn aside from the voyage to Palestine, attack Constantinople and restore his father and himself to the throne. The offers were splendid; the temptation irresistible, especially as Dandolo (who clearly understood the advantages for Venice) used all his influence to reënforce the young pretender's arguments. The final promise to the Crusaders of 200,000 silver marks and of 10,000 armed men to assist in the pious war in the Holy Land, at last broke down the objections of the pious and the hesitant. In 1203 the whole expedition, upon Venetian vessels, glided up the Ægean, through the unguarded Hellespont and appeared in the Bosphorus. The wretched Alexios III had long had word of their coming but had made no preparations worth considering. The attackers numbered 30,000 to 40,000 Crusaders, individually of very high fighting efficiency,—besides the very large Venetian contingent. Inside the capital there was dismay and disaffection. After some fighting around the Golden Horn, the great officials in the city chased Alexios III from the throne; drew the blind old Isaac II from his prison, hailed him again as Basileus, and then sent to the Crusaders beseeching them to stay their hands because success had crowned their efforts. Young Alexios was invited into the city to share his throne with his father, and the Crusaders and Venetians were thanked as being the saviors of the restored dynasty.

The Crusaders Quarrel with the Greeks. Storming of Constantinople (1204)

Five months of increasing friction and hard feeling followed. The Crusaders and Dandolo were inexorable in claiming the promised rewards. Isaac was now half imbecile; his son, styled Alexios IV, had to wrestle with the problem of an empty treasury, a demoralized civil service, a mutinous guard and a capital city that regarded his late champions and "beloved friends" as only a shade better than Turkish misbelievers. Probably Dandolo, with the uncanny vision of blindness and of age, forecasted events correctly and deliberately stimulated a bad situation. In January, 1204, Alexios IV in an evil hour endeavored to seize some of the Church

treasure to procure the money wherewith to buy off the Latins. Instantly all the concentrated hatred towards the "Non-yeast-using" Westerners blazed up in the capital. Every Latin caught within the gates was massacred. In the uproar Alexios IV himself was overpowered and strangled. His helpless father died of terror, and an officer, one Alexios Dukas, was proclaimed Basileus as Alexios V.

Constantinople seethed with a great population, but it was undisciplined, ill-organized, utterly bewildered, and the new ruler was not given a respite wherein to collect his resources and to summon help from the provinces. Eager now to "avenge" Alexios IV the Crusaders and Venetians attacked the city as soon as they could make the necessary preparations. They were more fortunate than the Saracens of 717. Alexios V was an infinitely feebler personage than Leo III, and conditions in the city were far more demoralized. The Venetians now had complete control of the sea, including the Golden Horn; and they had long since mastered the terrors of Greek fire. Undoubtedly too the garrison of reliable professional troops was much smaller in 1204 than in the days of Moslemah's vain attack.

Nevertheless the ancient fortifications did not betray their defenders. The first attempts of the Latins were repulsed, whether they tried to storm the land walls to the West or the sea walls along the Golden Horn.[1] The Crusaders were seriously discouraged at this repulse. The more scrupulous talked darkly of the impiety of fighting fellow Christians and of "the hand of Heaven"; but Dandolo heartened them for another assault. On April 12, 1204, after desperate fighting the Venetians contrived to force their ships under an exposed point of the sea-wall, to throw men upon the ramparts, then speedily to open a gate, after which the raging Latins swarmed within. Alexios V made a vigorous attempt to rally his men, but the best of the garrison were foreign mercenaries. They seized this critical moment to mutiny over a question of pay! Soon all was lost. The Emperor fled the capital by night, and so fortunately for themselves did many other of the leading citizens. The garrison melted away. The Franks found themselves, the morning after the storming of the ramparts, in undisputed possession of "the most wonderful city in the world."

[1] The current and the prevailing winds in the Bosphorus and Marmora made attacks on the other parts of the sea walls almost hopeless.

Hideous Sack and Destruction of Constantinople (1204)

What followed was a deliberate pillaging which for sheer destructiveness, brute passion and lust for plunder ranks among the greatest crimes in universal history. For three days there was a carnival of rape and pillage. Nuns fared no better than courtesans at the hands of the uncaged soldiery. Several thousand of the unresisting citizens were slaughtered in cold blood. The Greek clergy were tormented or slain. Churches and convents were violated with coarse orgies. A harlot was enthroned by the "Soldiers of the Cross" in the patriarch's chair in Hagia Sophia and screamed out ribald songs. Of course everything in the way of portable wealth was incontinently seized. What to the man of a later day appears as a crime almost beyond all others was the wanton destruction of very many, probably hundreds, of precious examples of Greek art; the statues by the peers or successors of Pheidias. The marbles by these "damned pagans" were shattered to prove true Christian hatred towards idolatry. Their priceless bronzes were melted down into wretched copper money. The tombs of the Christian emperors were stripped of their finely wrought metal work; and all the art objects in the churches were stolen or ruined. The conquerors are alleged to have burned whole libraries in their campfires. So for several days these French, Flemings and Italians, sinners together, wrought a mischief which (from a cultural standpoint) probably made later devastations by the Turks merely a secondary evil.[2] The crime of the Fourth Crusade is summed up in the honest denunciation of the great Pope Innocent III who, refusing to congratulate the Crusaders upon their "victory," told them that now they had made the reconciliation of the Greeks with the Papacy more difficult than ever, "because the Greeks see in the Latins only treason and works of darkness, and loath them like dogs!"[3] History abundantly vindicated this fell prophesy.

[2] What to many of the pious plunderers constituted the greatest treasures, were the "Holy Relics" with which Constantinople then abounded and which were now duly stolen from the churches and monasteries and shipped all over the West. Relics of Christ and the Virgin, Apostles and the later Greek saints were thus scattered everywhere in France, Italy, and even Britain. To this day the head of St. John Chrysostom is in the Duomo in Pisa.

[3] The high-minded Pope was ahead of most Latins, however, in condemning this outrage. Nearly a century later a monkish writer could justify the spoliation of Constantinople, saying, "God delivered the city into the hands of the Latins, because the Greeks declared that the Holy Ghost proceeded only from the Father, and celebrated the mass with *leavened* bread."

"Feeble" Latin Empire at Constantinople (1204-1261)

This calamity gave the New Rome a shock from which the city never recovered. It was only a bare husk, much of it destroyed with fire, which was left when the conquerors recovered from their orgy and undertook to divide their conquests. They confidently assumed that since by one great stroke they had taken the hitherto inviolate capital, the provinces of their victims would fall to them with little struggling. Baldwin of Flanders was proclaimed "Emperor." To him was given the site of Constantinople, deserted now by two-thirds of its inhabitants. He was also to have considerable territories, especially in Thrace and Asia. A Frankish "King" was to be set up at Salonica, pledged to "do homage" to his over-lord at the greater city. Various lesser "fiefs" were assigned to other deserving or assertive barons. The Venetians asked as their formal right "a quarter and half-a-quarter" of the entire conquest. They named the new patriarch of Constantinople, and of course they took to themselves unmeasured trading privileges. But they were too wise to demand territories reaching far inland, which they could not readily protect by their naval power. They, however, annexed Crete and practically all the Ægean isles, as well as many desirable harbors and coastal fortresses in Greece. Above all they now had the joy of seeing the complete ruin of the commerce and merchant marine of their Greek rivals. In a devilish, worldly-wise manner, therefore, Enrico Dandolo had wrought incalculable gain to his native city, but Venice was only the temporary gainer by this pitiful Fourth Crusade. Christian Constantinople never was to be her glorious self again; and the memory of those three days of bestial pillage was to burn into the memories of the Orthodox East, making it hate the Catholic West as passionately perchance as it did the Infidels; for (as a Greek witness to the sack of 1204 incisively remarked) "the Franks behaved far worse than the Saracens."

The seizure of Constantinople by the Latins made it possible to demonstrate nevertheless that the Christian "Greek" civilization of the Levant did not exist through and for the great city alone. The Crusaders and Venetians were numerous enough to deal a single military blow; they were decidedly too few to occupy and garrison a wide territory with a bitterly hostile population. All schemes indeed for going into the Holy Land and redeeming their vow were

impiously dropped, but not a few knights and barons returned promptly to France laden with treasure and with saints' relics (even more precious!) plundered from the outraged Eastern Churches. Yet thanks to Venetian naval aid, and to the admirable defensive qualities of Constantinople, if only the sea were controlled, the hybrid Latin "Empire of Roumania" maintained itself, though at a poor dying rate, from 1204 to 1261.[4]

The non-Greek peoples of the Balkans, the Serbs and the Bulgars, naturally used the opportunity to expand their territories and to consolidate their national independence. Baldwin I, the new "Latin" Emperor, was himself taken prisoner by the Bulgars, and put to death while in captivity after a reign of only one year. His heirs prospered little better. Soon they held only the capital and a thin strip along the Marmora in Thrace. Epirus had promptly "organized" itself as an independent Greek "despotate," and in 1222 its dynast wrested Salonica from the Westerners. Only in Greece proper, in easy reach of the sea, did the Frankish cavaliers have some real success. Here they possessed themselves of most of Central Greece and the Peloponnesus, setting up in that last named peninsula "twelve baronies and 136 knights fees." In Greece established himself that Otho de la Roche as "Duke of Athens," who claimed "seigniorial rights" over Attica and Bœotia, and held knightly tournaments upon the Acropolis rock which still guarded the unshattered Parthenon and Erectheum.

The Empire of Nicæa. Recovery of Constantinople by the Greeks (1261)

But elsewhere the Greek Empire "like some creature of low organization, showed every sign of life in its limbs though its head had been shorn away." A prince of the old Komnenian dynasty fled to Trebizond in the Black Sea and established there an "Empire" including a long strip of coast land in the old regions of Pontus and Paphlagonia. How Epirus and presently Salonica defied the Latin yoke has just been stated. The actual rally, however, was made at Nicæa in Bithynia. Hither fled Theodore Laskaris, the ablest general of the dethroned Angeloi Emperors. At the venerable City

[4] Constantinople after 1204 underwent quite a large Italian influx which settled largely in the suburbs (Pera and Galata) north of the Golden Horn. These colonists naturally could be relied upon to resist a Greek reconquest. Even prior to the Fourth Crusade the Latin elements in the city had become very numerous, and frequently were involved in serious riots with the Greeks.

of the Creed, recovered now for more than a century from the Seljuk, he set up his capital and affected to rule over *"Rhomais"*—the land of the Romaioi. This "Basileus in Exile" shines through the chronicles as a leader of superior stuff. He flung back the Turks when they tried to take advantage of the Christians' calamities, and took successful measures to consolidate his distracted dominions and restore to them a modicum of prosperity. Theodore died in 1222, but the succeeding "Emperors of Nicæa" built wisely on his foundations. In 1241, having put the Latin intruders in Constantinople hopelessly on the defensive, they overcame their fellow Greek, the Despot of Epirus, took from him Salonica and forced him to confess vassalage.

In 1261 came inevitably the outward liquidation of the Fourth Crusade. The "Latin" Emperor, Baldwin II (1228-1261), was at his wits' end for money, even stripping the lead from his palace roof to raise funds wherewith to lure mercenaries to continue the defense of his one remaining possession—the impoverished capital. At length when his sole genuine protection, the Venetian fleet, was in other waters, the troops of the "Nicæa" Emperor, Michael VIII Palaiologos (1260-1282), surprised and stormed the city which they had never ceased to call their own. So ingloriously ended the Latin dominion in the Levant.

But although Michael Palaiologos was an adroit and successful if highly unscrupulous Græco-Asiatic, no ruler, even if of far superior genius, could have breathed strength and health into his restored "Empire." More than half the Balkan peninsula was now held by the Bulgars and Serbs. The Italians had robbed Constantinople of her carrying trade, her commerce and her industries; and if the Genoese were often willing to aid the Emperors against the Venetians, they were pitiless in exacting economic privileges for themselves. The old civil administration with its Roman traditions had been destroyed, and replaced by crude semi-Oriental expedients. The Palaiologoi, the new dynasty founded by Michael, presented a succession of princes usually mediocre or worse, but though their follies doubtless expedited the progress of Turkish invasion, merely by personal abilities they could hardly have rescued their weary and outworn state from some final disaster.

The recapture of Constantinople in 1261 practically used up the last reserves of strength, moral and physical, possessed by the old

race which claimed the dual heirship of Pericles and Augustus. The Turks ("Ottoman" soon in their leadership) did not become really aggressive again until about 1300. They did not penetrate into Europe and ensconce themselves in Adrianople until 1353 and thereafter. The final catastrophe to Christian Constantinople of course was postponed until 1453. Meantime the unhappy Palaiologoi used many years of this last lease of Christian power by the Bosphorus in unrighteous dynastic civil wars, which weakened their shrinking, impoverished realm almost as much as did the assaults of the Infidel.[5]

In the retrospect of history the iniquity of the Fourth Crusade increases in blackness. Before 1204, despite the economic decline and the misrule under the Angeloi there was still fair hope of another revival of the Romaioi, which could enable them to continue to be the bulwarks of Europe against attacking Asia. The Fourth Crusade destroyed this possibility. Of this expedition and the Latin dominion, it has wisely been written by its chief modern historian, Pears, "it deserves only to be remembered as a gigantic failure, a check to the progress of civilization, a mischievous episode, and abortion among states, shapen in iniquity and dying amid ignominy."

At the assize of civilization Enrico Dandolo and Baldwin of Flanders stand convicted as master criminals.

Notes on the Non-Greek Peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, Prior to the Ottoman Invasions

The detailed annals of the non-Greek peoples who settled in the Balkan peninsula during the early Middle Ages, are not of prime importance in a general history of the Near East, but the primary facts about them have to be stated.

The South Slavs

The *South Slavs,* or the *Serbs* (to use the name of their largest branch) seem to have existed prior to 500 A. D. as a primitive agricultural people in Galicia near the sources of the Vistula and the Dniester. Early in the sixth century they moved to the shores of the Black Sea, then began filtering at many points across the Danube into the nigh depopulated territories of the East Romans. By the end of the sixth century their bands were taking advanage of the

[5] By 1400 the population of Constantinople had dwindled to under 200,000. The great palace and many other notable buildings were in ruins and even Hagia Sophia in very bad repair. Much open space lay within the walls covered with foundations of abandoned edifices. Practically all the remaining wealth and trade was in the Genoese and Venetian hands in their fortified "factories" at Galata and Pera.

weakened state of the Empire to settle as far south as Greece itself. The main Serbian settlement, however, was in the old provinces of Illyricum. The Avar invasions destroyed there the last vestiges of Roman authority, and Heraclius (610-641) was too preoccupied to try to prevent the Slavs from occupying practically the entire region.

During the seventh and eighth centuries the Serbs became something like a well-rooted nation, but for long their history seems chiefly to be the story of a constant struggle between the semi-independent clans and the effort of the most powerful chief, the "Grand Zhupan," to make his claim to royal domination become a reality. During the centuries preceding 1000 A.D. the bulk of the South Slavs, especially the Serbs, became converted to the Greek type of Christianity, although their brethren, the Croatians, nearest the Hungarian and Venetian lands, became Catholics. Thus was established a serious division between the South Slavic peoples which exists to this day.

The "Grand Zhupans" gradually asserted and extended their power, but found it very difficult for their ill-compacted semi-barbarous state to hold its own against their more aggressive neighbors, the Bulgars. About 875 the Serbian leaders therefore went through some form of "submission" to the Basileus of Constantinople in order to gain protection. After the destruction of the Bulgarian kingdom by Basil II this reason for leaning on the Byzantines disappeared, and in 1042 there was a partially successful revolt against foreign suzerainty. The power of Constantinople continued, however, to be great; and Manuel Komnenos, by vigorous military measures, brought nearly all the South Slav peoples under his supremacy. Independence, therefore, did not really return, until the bands of all "Roman" authority were loosed by the Fourth Crusade.

During the thirteenth century the Zhupans successfully defied alike the Latin invaders and their own Hungarian and Bulgar neighbors. The power of the Serbian rulers steadily increased, and the nation enjoyed its heyday of prosperity and glory under the great national hero *Stephen Dushan*[6] (1335-1355). Stephen was a poor candidate for sainthood, but he was undoubtedly a mighty warrior who not merely brought the Bulgars under his supremacy, but deliberately undertook to destroy the tottering Greek empire of the Palaiologoi, and substitute a Serbian dominion in Constantinople. At the height of his power he actually proclaimed himself "Emperor of the Serbs and the Greeks." His law code shows him an intelligent legislator and codifier worthy to be compared with contemporaneous western lawgivers. In 1355 he was preparing a great attack on Constantinople which would probably have succeeded, and thus have forced the Turks to fight for their passage into Europe not with the exhausted Greeks but with the young power of Serbia. In that year, however, Stephen Dushan very suddenly died. His son Urosh was young and entirely incapable of handling the arrogant chiefs who had barely submitted to his father's drastic authority. Twenty years of civil wars thus proved the undoing of the Serbian nation. The Turks in the interval had entered Thrace,

[6] Stephen is charged with being a potentate of more than ordinary Balkan debatability of character. According to certain authorities his cognomen "Dushan" connoted "The Strangler," from his freely exercised method of eliminating non-friends, political or personal. Modern Serbian authors, however, consider him a maligned hero.

and in 1389 the victory of Murad I at Kossova put Serbia under the Ottoman yoke until modern times.

The Bulgars: Slavized Turanians

The Bulgars were originally a Turanian race akin to the Tartars, Huns, and Avars. In the seventh century they appeared as a horde of wild horsemen upon the Pruth; then, in 679, forced their way over the Danube, pushed back the Slavic colonists in Moesia who had come in shortly before them, and soon were advancing their bands almost to the gates of Constantinople. The Emperors were too preoccupied with the Saracens to be able to expel them, and the invaders accordingly settled down in modern "Bulgaria." They gradually lost their nomadic habits, became agriculturists, and coalesced with the numerous Slavic inhabitants of the region, their language becoming completely Slavized; although the old Turanian element supplied apparently the governing class and the political institutions of the country.

During the eighth and ninth centuries there was a steady succession of wars with Constantinople with varying success and many boundary shiftings, but accompanied by a constant penetration of civilization of the Greek type into Bulgaria, until in 864 A. D. the Czar Boris forsook his native paganism for the eastern form of Christianity, despite vigorous efforts by the Roman papacy to capture the new converts for Catholicism. The climax of "Old Bulgaria's" prosperity was in the reign of Czar Simeon (893-927) who encroached dangerously upon the Balkan themes of the Byzantine Empire, and apparently indulged in vainglorious hopes of actually supplanting the Basileus as dominator of the Christian East. He took the arrogant title "Emperor and Autocrat of all the Bulgars and the Greeks," and his capital Preslav boasted itself as the center of a realm blessed with a genuine cultivation of the arts of peace, and as "rivaling Constantinople" in the outward magnificence.

This prosperity was not to last. Civil wars, heresy disputes in the new Bulgarian church, Swiatoslav's Russian invasion, and last but not least the reviving military power of the Byzantine Empire pulled the kingdom down. Nevertheless Czar Samuel[7] (976-1014) made a gallant and for a long time successful fight against the disciplined armies and military genius of Basil II (see p. 57). By 1018, however, Bulgaria was conquered. It remained a province of the Basileus until a successful insurrection, led by the brothers Ivan and Peter in 1186, against the futile Isaac II Angelos. After the Fourth Crusade Bulgaria of course easily maintained her independence against the feeble Latins and the distracted Greeks, and again enjoyed considerable prosperity and cultural development. In the fourteenth century, however, she was defeated and brought into vassalage by Stephen Dushan during the brief noonday of the Serbian domination in the Balkan peninsula. After the Ottomans entered Europe the Bulgars were among the first to feel the might of their arms. In 1366 the Bulgar Czar Shishman III was obliged to acknowledge himself a vassal of Murad I, and in 1396 Bulgarian independence practically vanished

[7] There is a theory that Samuel was a "Vlach" and his followers quite as much a wing of the Wallachians [Roumanians] as true Bulgars.

when Bayezid I brought this Turanian people (in origin near cousins to the Turks themselves) completely under the Ottoman yoke.

The Albanians: an Isolated Survival from Antiquity

The Albanians, another Balkan race deserving brief mention, of course had existed in the peninsula at least since the beginning of our conventional Greek history. They were not Hellenes, but from of old they had been the near neighbors of the Hellenes, being none other than the ancient Illyrians and Epirots of ancient literature. "The Albanians, thus, are apparently the oldest race in Eastern Europe. History and legend afford no record of their arrival in the Balkan peninsula." [Bourchier.]

They had always been clannish hillsmen, impatient of interference with their tribal customs, hated to be "civilized," and submitted only with the greatest sullenness to a superior power. The Greeks imposed a certain authority over the region but never really Hellenized its intractable inhabitants. Under the Roman Empire the obedience to the Emperors depended precisely on the military forces they were able to throw into the region. The Albanians at last became outwardly converted to Christianity, but probably nowhere did ancient paganism die more by inches or leave greater traces of superstition than in this wild and inaccessible country.

In the early Middle Ages, although the South Slavs penetrated many of the Epirote valleys, and even therein established the lordship of their chiefs; and although certain Bulgarian Czars, especially Samuel (Basil II's opponent) wrung out of the Albanians temporary pledges of allegiance, these intrusions disappeared with the reassertion of Byzantine authority; while during part of the Middle Ages the native chiefs and the Emperors usually had wisdom, the first to offer a certain lip service, the second not to inquire too deeply into its sincerity. As a rule the imperialists held the important commercial harbor at Durazzo on the Adriatic and kept open the great high road to Salonica. They did not trouble the life of the clans in the mountains and hill pockets.

Albania thus was a region full of tribal wars but next to no real history. After 1204 came the rise of something like a native kingdom pretending to authority over the local chiefs. Stephen Dushan made the country submit temporarily to Serbia, but at his death independence and the collisions of the clans furnished the orders of the day until the Turkish invasion and partial conquest in the fifteenth century.

Albania continued to be the least developed country in Europe up to the time this book was written.

The Roumanian Lands, Wallachia and Moldavia. A "Latin" Survival

North of the Danube lies the region now bulking large in the modern mind as Roumania. Although not strictly a "Balkan" land, it figures too conspicuously in the recent history of Eastern Europe to omit some explanation of its origin.

Roumania occupies the territories of the Ancient Dacians, a race of battle-loving barbarians, who were alleged to have been exterminated by the Emperor

Trajan in two desperate wars, 101-106 A. D.[8] The new imperial province of "Dacia" was promptly filled up by Latin speaking colonists. It was, however, the most exposed region in the entire Empire, and when the latter was hard pressed by the attacks of Gothic and other invaders, about 271 the Emperor Aurelianus evacuated the province, withdrawing, it is alleged, its civilized inhabitants to the south side of the Danube. Obviously this deportation could not have been complete, but from that time till nearly the close of the thirteenth century the Dacian lands practically disappear from systematized history, while wave after wave of raw invaders—Teutons, Turanians and Slavs—must have made temporary settlements while on their way to other regions, and would seem in all reason to have obliterated the old population abandoned by Aurelianus if the modern "Roumanian" language did not survive as a somewhat startling witness to the contrary.

Late in the thirteenth century, Wallachia and Moldavia (the territories which later coalesced into Roumania) appear to be occupied by a populaion composed largely of "Vlachs," although with very noticeable Slav and Tartar elements. The early annals of the Vlachs ("Wallachians") appear almost untraceable, although apparently they first come on the scene as an agricultural population in Transylvania, Moldavia, and eastern Hungary, and with a hereditary feudal nobility, the *boyars,* which was more or less dependent upon the Hungarian crown. The large German colonies in eastern Hungary had also their influence upon the Vlachs, and the latter possessed certain institutions which apparently have a western origin.

After about 1300 there developed the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia; each with its native *voivode,* and with the Vlach element gradually getting the upper hand with other races and putting its stamp upon the country. For a long time the major events to be recorded concerned the repeated attempts of Hungary to assert her over-lordship, especially over Wallachia, and the resistance of the voivodes to the same. The first Wallachian leader to make a real impress on history was the voivode John Bassaraba, or "Bazarab the Great" (1310-38), who inflicted a crushing defeat upon Charles I of Hungary, and gained for his country complete independence. The Hungarian power was later reasserted, but the presence of the Turks into the Balkan peninsula usually enabled the Wallachian princes to pose as the allies rather than as the vassals of their Christian neighbor. The story of the smaller principality of Moldavia is somewhat similar.

The hostility of both principalities to the pretensions of Hungary decidedly weakened their resistance to Turkish invasion when this came in the fifteenth century. On the other hand the Turks contented themselves with making the Vlach voivodes into their vassal princes; they did not crush out the native governments as in Serbia and Bulgaria.

The language of Roumania presents an exceedingly difficult problem to those who assert that the old Roman population was practically destroyed in the thousand years of unchronicled chaos following Aurelianus's evacuation. "Roumanian [apparently] represents the original rustic Latin of the Roman

[8] Probably the "extermination" was not complete and many old Dacians became Roman provincials.

provincials in Moesia and Dacia though modified by centuries of alien rule. Structurally its Latin characteristics have been well preserved." There are numerous Turkish, Magyar and Greek words, but on the other hand many Latin words are retained in greater purity than in the Romance languages of the West. On the whole Roumanian seems closer to the ancient Latin than any other living language, although racially the modern Roumanian nation represents an exceedingly mixed group of peoples.

Transylvania was an essentially Roumanian land but the German and Magyar elements presently became very considerable. As early as 1004 A. D. Stephen I of Hungary conquered the country, and thereafter it was usually governed by a Hungarian voivode. After the middle of the twelfth and especially after the early part of the thirteenth centuries there was a large German colonization by "Saxons" who founded many of the more important towns and gave a central European tinge to Transylvanian culture. In later times the Germans represented around one tenth, the Magyars three tenths and the Roumanians some six tenths of the entire population.

After the disaster to Hungarian independence at Mohacz (1526 A. D.) and the virtual conquest of the country by the Turks, John Zapolya, the Transylvanian voivode, succeeded in making himself a semi-independent prince under Ottoman suzerainty, and Transylvania continued as a Turkish vassal state until the Peace of Karlowitz (1699 A. D.), when the region passed under the Austrian Hapsburgs.

During the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries Transylvania was permitted to retain its "Ancient Rights and the Laws of the Land"; but after the setting up of the "Dual Monarchy" (1867 A. D.) the country was completely incorporated with Hungary and lost every vestige of its local privileges, to the natural wrath of the Roumanian majority. The reaction came in 1919 when Roumania annexed Transylvania, and inevitably began a drastic process of "Roumanianizing" the Magyar and German minorities.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF ARABIA (571-632 A. D.) [1]

Genius and Historic Importance of Islam

The modern problem of the Near East finds its genesis in the collision between Orientalism as represented by Islam and Occidentalism as represented by Christianity. It seems futile to discuss whether in its universal aspects Christianity is a purely Western religion. (Certainly its Founder, in His earthly presence was a Semite!) It is perfectly clear, however, that for practical purposes down to present times the struggle of Islam with Christianity has been very decidedly a struggle of East with West.

True it is that between Parthia or Sassanid Persia and the Roman Empire there was standing unfriendliness and frequent warfare. But this struggle was indescribably intensified after the advent of Mohammed. To political opposition there was now added the deadlier fire of religious hate. Considering the mere probabilities of the case, if Islam never had arisen it seems likely that Christianity would gradually have commended itself to an increasing number of Asiatic peoples, assumed, of course, a more pronounced Oriental form, and worked its way far Eastward, to be halted by boundaries one need not guess. This outcome was rendered indeed extremely likely by the terrible defeat which Heraclius inflicted upon Persian Zoroastrianism, the one religion which so far had made a real stand against Christian influence. At that juncture, however, like a meteorite from the blue—there came into the world a new religion; a religion primarily of power and not of love; a militant fanaticism appealing partly to the evil which lies in men and only partly to the good; a religion which by its very dogmas could not permit its votaries to treat non-believers as political equals, and which finally by the rigidity of its laws and social prescriptions

[1] Note: for *maps* illustrating the rise of Islam see chap. V, p. 51, and chap. XIII, p. 145.

made it still more impossible for a nation which accepted this faith to advance beyond a certain pretty definite point in its civilization.

Mohammedanism therefore erected itself in the Near East as "the Spirit which denies"—which called in question very many of the fundamentals, religious, social, and political, whereon European culture was developing, and which presently thrust itself bodily into Europe, propagating its dogmas by the crude gospel of the sword. The mere fact that Islam was peculiarly fitted to appeal to races at a certain imperfect stage of civilization, and that it carried with its irrational postulates a genuine moral enthusiasm and exultation, made its advance all the more deadly. If it had preceded Christianity, it might fairly have claimed a general superiority over any other Eastern religion.[2] Since it followed Christianity, it represented an unhappy reaction towards the primitive.

The gospel of Mohammed of Mecca is a living force in the twentieth century even as the present world knows to its cost. Without Islam the history of much of Asia, Africa, and of Southeastern Europe would have been changed, beyond all recognition. The tracing of its origins, rise, conquests, and then of its stagnation, comprises, therefore, a very large part of the whole story of the Near East.

To understand the political history of Islam one must distinguish several distinct stages in its flow and ebb:

I. The original conquests for Mohammedanism by the Saracens of Arabia in the seventh century.

II. The Saracenic empires, especially as they centered at Damascus and Bagdad; their prosperity, and then their gradual dissolution as we approach the year 1000.

III. The great reënforcement of Islam by the conversion of the Turanian Turks, especially of that branch known as the "Ottomans," who penetrated into Europe in the fourteenth century, took Constantinople in 1453, and reached their "high tide" when they dashed against Vienna in 1683.

IV. The steady decay of the Ottoman power since that date, and the practical expulsion of the Turks from Europe in the twentieth century.

[2] Doubtless the more spiritual leaders of Judaism ascended heights never mounted by Islam; but the intense nationalistic character of Judaism made it impossible to spread as a world religion, and to compete with the propaganda of other great creeds.

The Arabian Peninsula: a Land Ignored by Ancient History

The Arabian peninsula which in the seventh century suddenly projected itself into human interest, had been recognized as a neighbor of civilized lands for over two thousand years, yet had demanded very little attention. The Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and last but not least the great Arabian Desert reaching up to the verges of Palestine and Syria and almost to the banks of the Euphrates, had cut it off from the military and political currents of life surging and resurging between Egypt and Babylonia. The Assyrian war-lords had possibly reduced some of the fringing pasture lands to an unwilling vassalage. Alexander was declared to have been meditating an expedition into this practically unknown country when death cut him short at Babylon (323 B. C.). We hear vaguely also of Arabian "kingdoms" usually towards Palestine, which were more or less submissive to Roman influence during and after the first Christian century. Downward from Babylonia the Persians had extended their influence, and the "Arabian" kingdom of Hira is reported as a vassal state of the Sassanids. About the time of the birth of the Prophet, the Christian kings of Abyssinia are alleged to have established a temporary dominion in southwest Arabia, and even to have menaced with capture Mohammed's birthplace, the holy city of Mecca.

All these attempts merely touched the fringes of an extremely isolated "small continent" 1500 miles in maximum length, 1300 in breadth, and covering an area of at least 1,200,000 square miles. Arabia is not an unmitigated wilderness, but few lands afar from the frozen north seem less adapted to maintain a numerous and highly developed population. One third of the country is actual stony desert. Of the remainder, thanks to the scanty rainfall, only a small portion is fitted for agricultural communities. The rivers are mere "waddys"—rushing torrents in the brief rainy season, parching beds of hot stones for the remainder of the year. Much of the country supplies enough thorny herbiage for undiscriminating camels and goats, provided their owners do not camp too long in one place. Here and there lie considerable regions of reasonably fertile irrigated ground where settled agricultural life is possible. Near the West coast especially are such territories, giving opportunity for the development of cities—notably Mecca and Medina. It was in

these arable tracts near the Red Sea,—hard pressed by the desert but not quite overwhelmed by its sands—that Mohammed [3] the Prophet lived out his life.

The Arabs Before Mohammed. Mecca and the Kaaba

The inhabitants of this vast region appear to have been fairly pure blooded Semites, although there may have been a penetration of certain Cushite and Ethiopic elements from across the Red Sea. Out of Arabia seem to have come the ancestors of Babylonians, Phœnicians, and Hebrews, the founders of mighty empires, political, commercial, and spiritual; but their cousins, the traditional sons of Ishmael, steadily denied the heritage of their more fortunate kinsmen, had remained with their flocks and herds, pitching their tents of black camel's hair now by this, now by another oasis pool or clump of palm trees, or developing a very primitive type of town life in the agricultural regions. Except on the edges of Syria and Babylonia, these Arabs seems to have been able to produce not kings but chiefs, not nations but tribes. They were still, during the sixth Christian century, in that twilight stage between barbarism and civilization, which is marked by the gradual and imperfect adoption of a written language. Plenty of anecdotes display these sons or neighbors of the desert as full of uncouth usages such as gross drunkenness, an addiction to brawlings and blood feuds, and the burial alive of superfluous girl infants. On the other hand, they had the virtues of a life in the great expanse—profuse hospitality, equally reckless generosity, devotion to their tribes and kinsfolk, noble adhesion to a given pledge, and headlong valor in war.

Contact with Rome and Persia was gradually breaking down this barbarism. Caravans laden with gums, frankincense, and other products of the land, and with those precious carpets woven then as always by Oriental women, visited the Syrian and Mesopotamian cities, and came back with the products of civilized industry, and still more important with unsettling ideas about a manner of life superior to that which reckoned its wealth in camels and sheep. At certain times large parts of Arabia consented to a "Sacred Truce" of considerable length. Tribes were gathered at some "fair," a con-

[3] This seems the wisest method for spelling his name. There are many ways of "trimming the Prophet's beard." *Mahomet* is the older English usage; *Muhhummed* perhaps is nearer the actual Arabic. The Mediæval Christian writers distorted the arch-foe of Christianity into *Mahound*.

venient center for exchanging cattle, for listening to the "poets"—whose minstrel effusions resembled those of the bards of other countries, and usually for joining in various religious ceremonies. One of the most important places of rendezvous had come to be Mecca, the largest city on the west coast, if not in Arabia proper. Here rose the sacred Kaaba, a small cube-shaped temple built of uncut stones, erected, according to general belief, by Abraham and his son Ishmael; and here the angel Gabriel had brought to the twain the famous "Black Stone"—white originally, but black because of the sins of those who touched it!

The ruling classes in Mecca belonged to the arrogant and comparatively civilized race of the Koraichites. As guardians of the Kaaba, the Black Stone and the sacred well of Zem-Zem (an indispensable part of the local religious economy), and last but not least of "three hundred and sixty idols," probably horrid stone fetishes that were located in the Kaaba compound, they controlled the most important shrine in Arabia. The annual concourse of pilgrims brought them no small gain. More profits came from the constant caravans to and from such cities as Bostra and Damascus on the edge of the Roman provinces. Possibly conditions of life in Mecca approximated those of the more simple and unadvanced Syrian towns of the Eastern Empire. Certainly no other part of Arabia proper was more civilized or more penetrated with foreign ideas. Had Mohammed begun his movement in any less developed part of the peninsula he would have labored under a far heavier handicap.

Arabian Religion Before Mohammed: a Crude Nature Worship, Plus "Allah"

In the sixth century the Arabian religion was probably about what it had been for thousands for years—a crude nature worship, the adoration of stars and fetish stones; the fear of jinns (the "genii" of later lore), and of *divs*—downright malevolent demons. "Credulous rather than believing, the Arabs' religion consisted of a mixture of naturalism and a gross fetishism." There was no systematic mythology. There were "oracles" supposed to give answers to human questioning, and here and there existed numerous temples inhabited by "gods" of local acceptance, like the 360 denizens of the Kaaba. Such temples had priests or rather ministers who received the offerings of the superstitious and celebrated sacri-

fices after the usual forms of Semitic paganism; but there was no elaborate national religion, held passionately out of deep conviction by the millions of Arabia, the abandonment whereof would have involved a genuine blow to an influential priesthood.

Along with this idol and demon worship there appear illogically enough marked traces of worthier religious notions. Even at the Kaaba, simultaneously with the 360 images, people revered a manner of tutelary genius, "Allah-Taala"—"God Almighty," the God of Ishmael and of Abraham. Allah was recognized pretty generally as a kind of King of Heaven; little understood, indeed, and far less likely to mix directly in human affairs than the inferior spirits who must be propitiated to avert personal misfortune, but nevertheless a kind of distant Regulator of the universe; just as far away in Constantinople a mysterious though mighty potentate somehow exercised lordship over the Roman governors and petty officials in Syria.

This belief in a "High God" was increased by the large number of Jewish and Christian colonies sprinkled up and down Arabia, especially along the west coast. Probably little groups of Jews had been "fleeing into the desert," and settling down in small villages on the oases ever since Titus's destruction of Jerusalem. Some of the tribes of Christian Arabs had doubtless been converted by missionaries. But the majority were probably composed originally of dissenters, "heretics" of one or another unorthodox persuasion, who had quitted the Roman province to avoid persecution by the civil rulers and bishops for failing to accept the Gospel according to Constantinople. These small but fairly numerous colonies would all unite in teaching the natives that idols were vanity, and that one God was supreme. Their other theological information, however, would be contradictory and curious. It is not likely the Arabian Jews adhered to the ordinary Mosaic doctrines as interpreted by the more authoritative rabbis. As for the Christians they frequently belonged to sects which had delivered themselves over to outlandish mysticism or sheer superstition.[4] Some questioned the deity of Christ; others practically denied His human aspect and considered the Crucifixion a kind of stage play designed to impose upon the evil-minded Jews. It was from Christians and

[4] The Arabian Christians probably accepted as authoritative the Apocryphal gospels with their absurdly distorted and degrading anecdotes and alleged utterances of Jesus.

Jews such as these that Mohammed seems to have gained many notions or stories—clearly of Christian or Hebrew origin—which later appeared in the Koran. It is not surprising, therefore, that these contributions became marvelously distorted.

For several centuries before Mohammed, his people, the "Saracens" (desert-dwellers), had been known both to Roman and Persian as formidable fighters. What the Bedouin horsemen could do when they found a leader, a rallying place, and a common cause, had been already shown in the days of the glory of Palmyra and of the reigns of Œdenathus and Zenobia (see p. 8). But ordinarily the Saracens had seemed hopelessly divided into petty bands which the governors or satraps of the frontier provinces had usually looked upon as robbers rather than as possible invaders. Many desert sheiks with their followers had indeed enlisted as mercenaries in the Roman service, and fought valorously, but that all Arabia could suddenly fuse itself into a single military state, and in the name of an upstart fanaticism precipitate itself upon the lands of established civilization was about the last thing which the lords of Constantinople and Ctesiphon dreaded. Heraclius and Chosroës II continued the wars which were exhausting their empires, while in the southern deserts there was arising the cloud no bigger than a man's hand. When the tempest suddenly broke East Roman and Persian could reproach themselves for many things, but not assuredly for failing to realize that the impossible had happened in Arabia.

Birth of Mohammed (571 A. D.). His Youth and Marriage to Khadija

On the 20th of April, 571 A. D.,[5] Mohammed was born in Mecca as the posthumous son of the Koraichite Abdallah. The latter had been of good family but had left his heirs with a very slender fortune. The orphan inherited a small house, a black slave, five camels, and some sheep. Young Mohammed was reared by his uncle Abu-Taleb, a kindly, wise-hearted man, but himself of no great means. His nephew, therefore, in his youth, was obliged to put in much of his time tending sheep, a business which the richer Meccans often left to girls or to slaves. Later, however, Mohammed congratulated himself for this experience, recalling that Moses and David likewise

[5] This year is presumably correct, but Mohammed may have been born a year earlier or a year later. There was no registration of births in sixth-century Mecca.

had been shepherds and that it was among the shepherds that Allah was wont to select his prophets.

As he grew to maturity his uncle arranged that he should enter the service of the rich widow Khadija. She sent trading caravans to Syria and as her agent and man of affairs young Mohammed made at least one expedition to Bosra or Damascus, returning with report of good gains to his mistress. Whether this sight of a "Roman" city, with its mighty walls and gates, its theater, baths, forum, and its churches with splendid ornaments and stately ritual produced any real impression upon him none can positively say. The probabilities are that they supplemented certain convictions he must have been already forming by conversations with the Jewish and Christian colonists near Mecca.

Mohammed by his intelligence, faithfulness, and also presumably by his handsome person, captivated the heart of the susceptible widow. He had been her servant, but he was of the best blood in Mecca, and Arabia was too primitive a country to develop extreme prejudices as to occupation. In his twenty-ninth year he wedded the forty-year-old Khadija. Despite the disparity of ages this union was a happy one. Mohammed was apparently faithful to Khadija for the rest of her life. Of course he now became practically the owner of her property, and therefore one of the wealthier men of Mecca. His wife seems to have been a woman of high character and of a worthy energy which evoked the best in his nature. Consequently her husband soon passed for an honored member of the community, and was known as Mohammed El Amin—"The Trusty," —he who could ever be relied upon.

Mohammed Begins His Career as Prophet (611 A. D.)

This is neither the place wherein to summarize the excellent and detailed biographies[6] of the son of Abdallah, nor to attempt a psychological analysis of the motives which compelled him to declare himself the "Messenger of God." For the purpose of a general history his public career can be summarized thus:

[6] It is worth noting how much better the later world is informed about the personal details of Mohammed than of Jesus. Every possible fact about the Prophet was carefully treasured by his disciples. It is very doubtful, however, if real Christianity would have gained, if to the study of its message of love and sacrifice there had been added nice questions as, for example, the precise apparel of its Founder at the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee.

I. Mohammed's marriage had brought him wealth, and wealth brought him leisure. This leisure he appears often to have spent in long ascetic meditations upon Mount Hira in the wilderness nearest Mecca. Here he became gradually possessed of notions which were to affect world history. "None but those who have lived among Asiatics understand how an Oriental mind can brood over an idea. It is perhaps the most marked distinction between him and the Western man. The European thinks, the Oriental *reflects;* and if left to himself, the idea, turned over and over endlessly in his mind, hardens into the consistency of steel." [7]

Mohammed was in any case of a deeply religious nature, and the worship of "Ozza and Lat" and the other 360 grotesque idols of the Kaaba doubtless was already repellent to him. He must have talked frequently with the Jewish and Christian colonists. Modern pathologists examining the evidence declared him to have been possessed with "the mania of grandeur"—an exaggerated sense of his own importance. He seems to have suffered from extreme flights of fancy, and from what an incredulous age would call "marked aberrations." There is no reason, however, for saying that he was an epileptic. If he had lived in modern times he would probably have been laughed at good-naturedly as a harmless, well-intentioned crank. Since he lived in seventh century Arabia he had soon to be taken seriously. The only real question was, Is the son of Abdallah inspired by God, or is he a willful impostor? Playful tolerance was soon out of the question.

In 611 A.D. Mohammed began to complain to his wife of distressing visions, especially of a supernatural being—an angel, who appeared before him with the command "Read!" This was very disquieting because Mohammed was illiterate. How could he comply with the behest of heaven? There were more visions and more inexplicable commands. His perplexed wife consulted a certain "wise cousin" Ouraka, who seems to have read Jewish and Christian books. The latter is alleged to have jumped to a momentous conclusion. "Holy Allah! (cried he) it is the angel Gabriel who aforetime appeared unto Moses, who now appears to your husband. Without doubt he will become the prophet of our nation!"

[7] Meredith Townsend in his remarkable collection of essays, "Asia and Europe" ("The Great Arabian"), p. 167.

Khadija henceforth took her husband very seriously, and Mohammed, greatly comforted, began to receive his visions with less hesitation. Soon these manifestations took definite shape. The "Suras," chapters of the Koran, began to be formulated. Commanded one of the earliest:

> "O thou who liest wrapped in thy mantle,
> Arise and give warning, and magnify the Lord!
> And purify thy garments, and keep aloof from defilement
> . . . And wait patiently for thy Lord."

Of what the new gospel of Mohammed consisted will be explained a little later. At the outset it was probably extremely simple,—"There is no Allah but Allah, and Mohammed is the prophet of Allah!" with the direct implication that the 360 idols of the Kaaba and all similar superstitions were worse than vanity.

The Years of Persecution in Mecca (611-622)

II. At first Mohammed persuaded of the validity of his mission his wife Khadija (a very intelligent woman), his keen and valiant nephew Ali, his freedman Zaid, and then a very few persons outside his family—notably his friend Abu-Bekr, a Meccan of some importance. For a while he spoke in public of his new religion very hesitantly. Most of his first converts were young men or persons of humble station. The Meccans simply mocked at him quietly, until he began to revile the pagan gods of the Kaaba and to intimate very clearly that the unregenerate forefathers of the citizens were in the eternal Gehenna. Soon thereafter the Prophet and his converts were subjected to very active persecution, the more because the worship by pilgrims of the Kaaba gods was highly profitable, and the Koraichites feared economic ruin if the prestige of Ozza and Lat was shaken.

Between 611 and 622, Mohammed was repeatedly in fear of his life. Once he compromised by teaching that the gods of the Kaaba were a manner of intermediaries between mankind and Allah, but soon he became ashamed of this concession and more specifically than ever preached the doctrine of hell-fire for unbelievers. During this time Khadija, his faithful wife, died, as did Abu-Talib, his powerful uncle and protector. The Prophet and his followers were now treated with absolute ostracism, so that they were isolated as

a kind of plague-stricken aliens in a single quarter of their native city. Nevertheless through it all, Mohammed never flinched in belief in the validity of his mission. Little by little he gathered more followers, some of them destined to be mighty generals, governors, and Kalifs of the Moslem Empire-to-be; but at that time they were attracted to Mohammed solely by the logic of his teachings and the winsomeness of his character.

After matters had gone on thus in Mecca for ten years, Mohammed seemed nearing the end of his rope. His enemies were nigh ready to risk a blood-feud with his relatives in order to kill him; [8] and his humbler followers were already being sorely persecuted. He actually considered flight to the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia (an act that would have changed all history) when suddenly a new opportunity dawned.

The chiefs of Medina, the rival city to Mecca, had become convinced of the truth or at least of the desirability of his doctrine. They agreed to receive him and to allow him to set up his religion. To escape the Koraichites, furious at the idea of desertion to so unfriendly a city as Medina, was difficult business, but Mohammed, accompanied only by his ever faithful Abu-Bekr, at length accomplished his famous "Hegira" ("Exit") over the two hundred and fifty miles to the northern city. The Moslems do well to date their era from this momentous "Flight of the Prophet" (June, 622 A. D.). The years of persecution were ended; the years of expanding victory were begun.

Friendly Reception of Mohammed at Medina (622 A. D.)

III. Prior to coming to Medina, Mohammed had certainly exhausted his resources as to peaceful propaganda. His methods had been those of legitimate, nay of reasonably gentle persuasion, however emphatic his assertions concerning hell-fire. He had specifically disclaimed all power to work miracles, or to be anything but a common mortal, although especially commissioned by Allah. He had finally left Mecca because he and his disciples were in danger of their lives. It would have been only human nature, if now he

[8] Most of Mohammed's kinsmen repudiated his religious pretensions, but Arabian custom would have compelled them to avenge a member of their family, however impossible his claims and actions.

felt it quite permissible to find a new method for propagating his religion.

Medina was a somewhat smaller city than Mecca. It was an ill-organized community, without a firm system of government, and with a large Jewish element which foolishly imagined the new Prophet would prove very friendly. There were no Kaaba gods to excite feeling against the new "Islam" ("Submission" to Allah); probably, on the contrary, it seemed very advantageous to set up a local religious center to draw custom away from Mecca.

Here in Medina, Mohammed built his first mosque—his house of prayer—and here the first muezzin, the mulatto Bilal, thundered out the great cry in the night-watches:—"Prayer is better than sleep! Prayer is better than sleep! Allah is Great!" From the pulpit of this humble structure of bricks and palm trunks Mohammed soon was wont to instruct the people. Speedily he had the majority of the Arabs of Medina at his disposal, and was able, as a kind of secular ruler, to begin the organization of a genuine Islamic community. His old followers who had escaped from Mecca were of course devoted to him, and his new followers rapidly increased. It is true that the Jews (when they discovered that Islam was *not* a modified Judaism) lost all their friendship, but the Prophet was soon in a position to defy them. In a little more than a year he was able to make a striking display of the new spirit that had penetrated his gospel.

Battle of Bedr (624): Beginning of the Gospel of the Sword

IV. The Koraichites had been enraged at the desertion of Mohammed. Betwixt Mecca and Medina there was speedily a war of petty raids and skirmishes. In 624 a strong, wealthy caravan from Mecca was returning from Syria. It was led by the great chief Abu-Sofian, the most inveterate of the Prophet's enemies. To protect this caravan from attack en route by the men of Medina, about 1000 Koraichites marched northward. Already Mohammed had been filling his followers with military ambitions; the revelations in the suras had become ever more aggressive. "Slay the Infidels wherever you find them; make prisoners, besiege, lay ambuscade against them." The "Infidels" at this time were simply the men of Mecca who had defied the Prophet. Now he led out of Medina

324 men fired with a tremendous hope: "Victory or Paradise!" Mohammed promised to the faithful that those who died in the "Way of God" would pass straight to eternal felicity. By the "Well of Bedr" the two little armies met. The Koraichites fought bravely but were swept down by the rush of fanatics who were resolved either to spoil their enemies' camp, or to sit down that night "with the black-eyed girls" at the "heavenly feast without satiety." The men of Mecca broke and fled. They left seventy slain—whose souls doubtless sought Gehenna! Fourteen Moslems had ascended to Paradise. The rest returned rejoicing to Medina, every man boasting at least of two camels for a spoil, and profoundly convinced of the truth and profitableness of Islam.

The battle of Bedr was in the truest sense a "decisive battle." It brought home to Mohammed *the enormous value of an appeal made simultaneously to religion and cupidity*. The Prophet's power was greater than ever. Doubtless, too, he was still more firmly convinced that every impulse in his breast was inspired by Allah; yet few great ones have gone through the acid test of worldly triumph much better than Mohammed. He never allowed his ecstatic moods to displace cool, worldly wisdom. His military and political measures were marked by extreme secular prudence. If a certain hardness and autocracy creeps into his words and deeds, he never put on regal state—even when he went forth with conquering armies; and he never lost those traits of moderation, personal gentleness, and benevolence which had won him such praise in his youth. But henceforth he frankly made Islam the gospel of the sword.

The Repulse of Mohammed's Enemies Before Medina

V. The Koraichites and Abu-Sofian, their chief, did not submit without a struggle to the verdict of Bedr. In 625 at Ohod there was another encounter over a Syrian caravan. Mohammed's army was larger than before, but his followers had become vain confident and obeyed his orders none too properly. The men of Medina were flung back, and it was only the courage and skill of the Prophet which enabled them to beat a tolerable retreat. For a little while his position at Medina was uncomfortable; the Jews in particular murmuring against him. But Mohammed boldly forced down the

dissidents and threatened the wrath of Allah upon the disaffected. The Koraichites failed to follow up their victory until 627. Then Abu-Sofian made a great effort to avenge the gods of Kaaba; he collected what was for Arabia a surprisingly large army. By bribes and promises a motley host of 10,000 men, many from the scattered Bedouin tribes allied with Mecca, were at length led up to Medina intent on sacking that city and making an end of Islam.

Mohammed did not lack in brave exhortations and comforting suras; but he surpassed also in organizing the defense. A Persian refugee aided him to improve the very crude fortifications of Medina, and especially to dig a formidable ditch to protect the most vulnerable part. At sight of this obstacle, the forcing of which was far beyond their elementary siege-craft, the Bedouins recoiled. Dissentions, skillfully increased by Mohammed, broke out in their ill-assorted army. Abu-Sofian could not hold it together; provisions ran short; and a great wind blew down the besiegers' tents. Most ingloriously, therefore, without serious fighting, the besieging host scattered and its leaders returned humiliated to Mecca. Mohammed had escaped a great military peril in so striking a manner that in the tents of the furthest Arabian tribes the sheiks would wag their beards, "Truly Allah is with him! Let us harken to his gospel."

Triumph of Mohammed. Surrender of Mecca (630 A. D.)

VI. The collapse of Arabian resistance to Islam was now inevitable. Mohammed took terrific vengeance on the Jewish community of Koreitza near Medina which had proved treacherous during the siege. Eight hundred of their males were slain in cold blood after surrender. "Islam has cut all ties!" was the inexorable answer of their former friends, when these wretches pleaded for mercy.

The Prophet was never more "inspired" than he showed himself in his policy following this great repulse of the Koraichites in 627. He carefully refrained from a premature attack on Mecca. Islam was now being commended by the profitable hall mark of military success. Tribe after tribe was confessing Allah and His Messenger, calculating upon booty in this world and paradise hereafter. Mohammed deliberately isolated Mecca, so that Abu-Sofian and his associates should feel their case hopeless. In 628 the Prophet made a "ten year" treaty with the Koraichites by which, under a truce,

all the Moslems were allowed to visit the Kaaba for three days to perform the sacred rites of pilgrimage in that city, which the new religion taught was the most sacred spot on the earth.

During this period of armistice Mohammed sent envoys to Heraclius the Emperor (just victorious over the Persians) and to Siroës, the Persian successor of the terrible Chosroës II. Both monarchs were bluntly requested by the uncouth Bedouin emissaries to forsake their native religions and to confess Islam! The tale runs that Heraclius diplomatically returned a benevolent and non-committal answer. Doubtless he was amused at the summons, yet wished to stand well with the desert sheiks. Siroës tore up Mohammed's letter with all the indignation of a pompous despot and flung the fragments in the envoys' faces.[9] The messengers returned with their report to Medina. Mohammed delivered himself of an ominous malediction: "Even thus, O Allah, rend Thou his kingdom for him!" In fifteen years the vast Persian monarchy had ceased to exist.

In 630 the cause of Islam was waxed so strong in Arabia that Mohammed took prompt advantage of certain breaches of the truce by the Koraichites. With his own 10,000 men "drunk with enthusiasm, vengeance and covetousness" he marched in turn on Mecca. The defenders of the old order recognized their cause as hopeless. The stone idols could promise them neither plunder nor salvation. Abu-Sofian, at his wits' end, let himself be led before the man whom he and his bands had chased from the city with murder in their hearts. It was Mohammed's hour of triumph. Zealous disciples dragged the fallen chief towards the tent of the Prophet, after muttering fatefully in his ear, "Believe or die!" "Out upon thee, Abu-Sofian!" cried Mohammed. "Hast thou not discovered that there is no God save Allah alone?" "Noble and generous sire," rejoined the defeated leader, "had there been such, he would have assisted me against thee." "Dost thou not acknowledge I am the Prophet of Allah?" pressed the victor. "Noble sire, as to this my heart is yet hesitant." "Woe upon thee," cried Abbas, a faithful Moslem at hand; "no time for hesitancy this! Believe and testify the creed of Islam, or thy head is struck from thy body!" Abu-Sofian loved his life. "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed

[9] A modern student who knows the Orient well thus describes the impression doubtless made on Siroës: "Should he, the Great King, be addressed in tones of command by a rugged, lean-shanked, wizened-faced, illiterate tent-dwelling desert thief, and ordered to receive a lecherous old poet . . . as the prophet of a God of sand and camel dung?" [Sykes, "The Caliph's Last Heritage," p. 80.]

is his Prophet," he murmured. The scene was an epitome of the whole expansion of Islam. In Arabia, as in other lands, nothing succeeded like success.

Mecca capitulated. Mohammed was very merciful, time and circumstances considered. Four implacable enemies alone were executed. Mounted on his camel and wearing his black turban, the Prophet presented himself at the Kaaba. Seven times he compassed about the holy place, then with his staff struck respectfully the sacred black stone. His followers exultantly flung from their pedestals the hideous pagan gods, and smashed them to fragments. *"Truth hath come,"* cried the exulting victor, *"and falsehood hath vanished, for falsehood is but a fleeting dream!"* So fell the stronghold of Arabian heathendom. All the Meccans took the oath of allegiance to the new faith and leader. General amnesty was proclaimed. Soon these chiefs of the Koraichites were to be valorous leaders of the very religion against which they had swung their scimitars. The son of Abu-Sofian was to be acknowledged as the Kalif of imperial Islam.

Mohammed the Uncrowned King of Arabia. His Death (632 A. D.)

VII. Mohammed was now the uncrowned king of Arabia. He disposed of the largest military force ever collected in the peninsula. His mandates were implicitly obeyed. From every quarter came in embassies of tribes seeking an easy way to submission. Christian Arabs went over to the new creed. The last great center of paganism, the city of Tayif, after vainly defying the first attack, soon was fain to capitulate. Although such vast temporal power was now lodged in his hands, Mohammed continued the life of a wealthy but by no means over-luxurious private citizen of Medina. One curious privilege indeed he granted himself; the suras of the Koran allowed to the true believers only four wives, but a special revelation presently permitted Mohammed to have yet more. He accordingly possessed himself of eleven wives, plus two inferior slave girls. But the Orient accepted this privilege as merely a righteous concession to inspired authority.

With great secular acumen the Prophet was soon arranging to

dispatch armies against both Rome [10] and Persia, but his mortal sands were running out. He had never claimed exemption from death, and as his strength failed he calmly made ready for the end, delivering discourses from the pulpit of the Medina mosque full of benevolence, high-mindedness, and such declarations as that "every Moslem is brother to every other Moslem." So finally a fever seized him, and he died in the arms of Ayesha, his favorite wife, praying at the last, "Allah, aid me in the agony of death! My God! The blessed companionship on high!" (632 A. D.)

Occidental history has long since dismissed all suggestion that this is the case of a "false prophet" with demoniac inspiration. "We can but state a strong conviction, when we affirm that a series of minute facts leave no doubt that Mohammed was from first to last absolutely sincere. He really believed that any strong conviction, even any strong wish, that he entertained, was borne in upon him by a power external to himself; and as the first and most memorable of these convictions was faith in God, he believed that power to be God, and himself its Messenger." [Townsend.]

One cannot examine Mohammed's biography without being impressed by the genuine nobility of much of his character. Even down to the end, when resistance had hardened him against his enemies, and when the cares of an expanding state had made his "revelations" pretty obviously the dry cogitations of a lawgiver, he often displayed a magnanimity and a real charity worthy of all admiration. He was passionate in his love of young children. It is said that a little girl could take him by the hand and lead him all about Medina. Assuredly in his later years he can be charged with acts of cruelty, sharp practice, and even of treachery, but considering the long period of persecution which he had undergone, and the belief that was in him that he was divinely inspired: "that a man of flesh and blood laboring under such delusions did no worse, and committed no more fearful crimes than did Mohammed, should be the wonder of the world."

[10] One Moslem expedition against Heraclius was actually made in Mohammed's lifetime, but it was repulsed by the disciplined troops of the Empire.

CHAPTER X

ISLAM: THE LAST GREAT ORIENTAL RELIGION

The summarizing of the gospel of Mohammed has been deliberately postponed in favor of summarizing his career. It is useful to restate now the fundamentals of that system which meets the religious needs of at least 225,000,000 persons even in the twentieth century.

The Koran: Its Origin and Nature

Mohammed died with his work completed. Arabia was won for Islam; and the Arabs, directed by his exceedingly competent disciples, would ultimately carry Islam to the Atlantic coasts and to the Malayan isles. It cannot be stated too emphatically that Mohammed had not, like Jesus, undertaken to infuse his followers with a new *spirit;* he had put them under explicit obedience to a new and very precise *law.* This law was embodied in the Koran ("The Reading" or "Recitation"). The Prophet was careful to proclaim the value of this book: "Let the Koran ever serve you for a guide. Do what it directs or permits you. Refrain from what it forbids." Mohammed himself appears to have been illiterate, but his more fortunate disciples carefully wrote down those sayings for which their master claimed divine inspiration. At first, this mass of spasmodic, extremely disconnected utterances, existed merely as a collection of writings on parchments, palm-leaves, and even on stones and shoulder-bones of sheep. Memories were still keen in Arabia. Mohammed himself and his intimates probably remembered even the longer suras with no great difficulty. After his death, however, an official version was required. The third Kalif, Othman, therefore caused an authoritative edition to be prepared in a single manuscript. The order of chapters in this final Koran is entirely unscientific. Without reference to their contents the longer suras (usually composed at Medina and very didactic or legalistic) are ordinarily put first; the shorter (mostly from Mecca, and simpler

and more devotional) come last. There are in all 116 suras, whereof the longest contains 287 of the rhythmic "verses" used by the Prophet; the shortest has only 3.

There is thus no literary unity in the Koran. Some suras are obviously spasmodic utterances of deep religious feeling; some are full of argumentation and theological formulas; some are heavy pieces of detailed lawgiving. There are very few ordinary narrative passages. The Koran thus is not a book easy for Western readers to peruse and appreciate. It resembles no other work with which they are commonly familiar, although some parts show considerable likeness to the Hebrew psalms and certain prophetic passages in Isaiah; while other parts savor of the Mosaic Code in the Pentateuch.

The literary excellence of the Koran is an article of faith for all good Moslems. There is little doubt that Mohammed was profoundly influenced by the "poets" of his people, and the more impassioned of suras swing along in a rhythmic prose that must have delighted the Arabs. The tone is often majestic, the images (borrowed from the lore of the Orient and especially from the deserts) striking, the arguments are driven home with true eloquence. The Western reader, unfamiliar with Arabic settings, is likely, however, to make slow progress, the tropes and metaphors seem farfetched, and constant blind allusions are being presented which call for a wordy paraphrase and not for a mere translation.[1]

However, since the Koran is presumably a divine work its value rests in its statements, not in its literary dress. To devout Moslems it soon came to "furnish their troubled souls with precise affirmations, which they embraced with assurance, because for the government of their lives it gave *certain, positive rules* which they had merely to follow in order to insure prosperity here below and salvation through all eternity." [Wahl.]

Islam: Its Fundamental Dogmas

Thanks to the Koran and to its accepted supplement, the Sunna,[2] it is possible to state Moslem dogma with great precision.—God is

[1] Probably the old translation by George Sale is still the best for the ordinary English reader. There are later translations much more "scientific," but sometimes requiring a glossary for the non-technical student to be able to understand them.

[2] The non-official discourses of Mohammed as recorded by his friends. In authority they bear somewhat the same relation to the Koran as the Apostolic Epistles do to the Christian Gospels.

one; a future life is assured with the unescapable alternative of reward or of punishment; Mohammed is God's Prophet.—These are the fundamentals.

Concerning God (Allah) it may be freely said that if Christianity accents His goodness, Islam accents His power. Allah is He who "has raised the heavens without visible columns, who has set in submission the sun and the moon, who has ordained that the night should enfold the day, . . . who is unique in the heavens and upon the earth, who begetteth not and is not begotten, and who has no son or companion." (This last an obvious stroke at Christianity.) Subject to Allah and acting as his faithful servitors are the angels. Once there was a mighty angel, Satan or Iblis, who rebelled against the Most High and who is now become the chief of the evil demons. These demons (*divs, afrids, peris,* and especially *jinns* = *genii*) were "created, before man, of fire without smoke." Some of these submit to Allah while others have joined the rebellious angels. The universe is therefore full of circumambient spirits of very differing degrees of benevolence.

Allah had revealed himself to man by means of prophets and their writings. "Each nation has had its prophet, and each time its sacred book." Chief of these prophets are the Hebrew worthies, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and then Jesus. "The Son of Mary" was born in a supernatural manner, yet he was not the son of God, but only an inspired man like Mohammed. His crucifixion was not real, but merely something to deceive the iniquitous Jews. Some of the ancient holy books still exist, but by human perversity they have been sadly altered; besides the Koran, as the final word of Allah, supersedes them completely; they are therefore to be discarded. Mohammed has the final message from Allah. *"I am the last of the prophets!"* was frequently on his lips. No superior revelation will follow him. Men must heed his gospel as the final direction as how to avoid the eternal burning prepared for the wicked and unbelieving.

Gehenna and Paradise. How to Win the Latter

As for mankind, at the Day of Judgment every soul must arise for its unescapable reckoning; "then will you return before Allah, and then will be told over to you all that you have done." After the

sins and good deeds have been weighed on extremely delicate scales bad Moslems and all unbelievers will be precipitated into Gehenna. There they will writhe forever in the flames. After the fire has consumed their skin, a new skin will grow, and their punishment will commence over again. They will "drink scalding water like a thirsty camel." All this and many other forms of unspeakable torment will last through eternity, the pains never growing less through familiarity but rather increasing.

For the "people of the right hand," however, is reserved paradise, "the garden of delights." The promised bliss is of a very specific physical character. Handsome youths shall unceasingly pass "cups of flowing wine." The heads of the blessed "shall not ache therewith, neither shall they be confused." There shall also be served all manner of dainties; and whilst the true believers recline on "wrought couches," under a delightful shade, they shall be clothed in silks and brocades, shall indulge in friendly discourse without folly or sin, and finally, but not least, each and every fortunate spirit shall be attended by a special bevy of houris, "damsels with bright eyes like hidden pearls," who shall minister to them with every sensual pleasure.[3]

To merit this bliss and to shun this anguish there are five essential duties for man, duties quite within the capacity of every right-minded mortal: (1) To believe in the essential dogmas of Islam—in the one Allah, the mission of Mohammed, and the future reward or punishment; (2) to pray, looking toward Mecca, five times each day,—at sunrise, noon, afternoon, sunset, and after nightfall; (3) to fast betwixt sunrise and sunset all through the sacred month of Ramadan; (4) to make the holy pilgrimage to Mecca, join in the ceremonies around the now purified Kaaba, and to cast stones into the near-by valley of Mina, which pilgrimage was to be accomplished at least once in a Moslem's normal lifetime; [4] (5) to give alms out of charity; and nowhere does the Prophet appear to much better advantage than in praising the Arab virtue of generosity. "O believers,

[3] Modern apologists for Islam have tried to represent that Mohammed was merely trying to depict a heaven and hell of *spiritual* bliss or misery in terms of Semitic allegory. A candid examination of the evidence does not lead to any such conclusion. The Prophet clearly had in mind a future state of physical anguish or of carnal delight.

[4] Pilgrimage to Mecca was relatively easy so long as Islam was merely an Arabian religion. When its votaries lived in Morocco and the Malay Peninsula, the time came when to be able to boast of having been to Mecca often constituted a claim to unusual piety. Circumcision was also required of all Moslems; but it was an old Arab custom, and was by no means confined in the East to the followers of Islam.

give alms out of the best ye have acquired. Bestow not gifts from the worst part of your possessions. . . . Ye will not attain unto perfect piety, until ye have given alms of that which ye love the most."

Personal Duties of a Moslem

Reënforcing these fundamentals, the Koran enjoined a fairly ennobling code of personal conduct in dealing with one's fellow men. Moslems must shun avarice, deceit, pride, lying, and the deeds of the libertine. They must keep from dice and wine, "those abominations invented by Satan." They must be modest, patient, humble, and forgive offenses and love justice. A good man will also ransom captives, and care for the orphan and poor in days of famine. Mohammed knew the vices of his country men and delivered many wise precepts. "Kill not your children through fear of poverty. Allah will provide for them and for you. Killing them is a great sin." "Fulfill your agreement. Verily an agreement is always inquired into by Allah." "Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with an honest balance. That is the best and the fairest way." "Squander not thy substance. For squanderers have ever been Iblis's brethren, and Iblis is ever ungrateful to his Lord," etc.

A true Moslem, therefore, if he lives up to the precepts of his creed, must needs be a man of a reasonably high level of personal morality. He is indeed permitted to have four wives, and as many more slave concubines as his heart desires and his purse permits, but he is forbidden to join in those incestuous unions which were common in pre-Islamic Arabia. He must not murder his superfluous children. He is directly ordered, "Treat your women well; for they are with you as captives and prisoners; they have not power over anything as regards themselves. And ye have verily taken them on the security of Allah, and have made their persons lawful unto you by the word of Allah!" Slaves are to be treated with humanity. Human life is precious and not to be shed without unmistakable cause, and among good Moslems not merely are "lives and property sacred and inviolable until the end of time," but "every Moslem is the brother of every other Moslem—all of ye are on the same equality."

Dealings with Unbelievers. The Holy War (Djihad)

Considered therefore as a new code of ethics for a semi-nomadic people just emerging from barbarism, the Islamic system represents a great moral advance. Its debatable qualities appear when the relations of the True Believers to the non-Mohammedan world are examined. In handling this problem the Prophet was in no wise consistent. While still on the defensive in Mecca, various suras speak of the unbelievers in terms almost of Christian charity. In few other matters in fact does the Koran so betray the fact that it was composed from day to day, and its contents dictated by the march of events,[5] for after the Hegira, and especially after the momentous battle of Bedr, Mohammed's tone changed. It is true that he always taught that the Jews and Christians as "peoples of the Book," with a partial revelation, were to be treated more considerately than downright idolaters. In general, however, Unbelievers were to be attacked under any and all circumstances. "When ye encounter the Infidels strike off their heads until ye have made a great slaughter among them, and bind them with bonds." "Make war on those who believe not in Allah and the Last Day; . . . make war on them until they pay tribute and are humiliated." Under such circumstances the only lawful options for Moslem rulers to present to non-Molsem neighbors are "Islam, tribute or the sword." Any equal peace with the Unbeliever, theoretically, at least, became sinful.

As Mohammed's gospel developed, the *Djihad* (holy war) became, therefore, the highest form of pious service. "Let the True Believers fight for the Religion of Allah. So shall they part with this present life in exchange for that which is to come. For to whosoever fighteth for the religion of Allah, *whether he be slain or victorious,* we will surely give him a great reward." There was indeed no surer way to cancel off a life of sins and to pass, without the preliminary state of suspense prior to the Day of Judgment, straight into the joys of Paradise and the embraces of the black-eyed girls than to die fighting against the Unbelievers. "Say not that those who fall in the 'Way

[5] The most direct incident of how Mohammed let his desires "inspire" him is shown in the case of his favorite wife Ayesha. She was accused of unfaithfulness. Mohammed was not anxious to believe the evidence. He received a revelation justifying him in acquitting her, and ordering twenty-four stripes upon whosoever henceforth accused an honest woman without being able to produce at least four witnesses.

of Allah' are dead. Not so! They are living, though ye perceive it not!"

Non-Originality of Islam. Its Suitability for Partially Civilized Peoples

Manifestly much of Mohammed's work is devoid of originality. Jewish, Christian, and not a few Zoroastrian Persian notions and legends jostle together in the suras.[6] There is a great substratum of the old jinn and nature cultus of the Arabs. The idols have vanished, but the host of good and bad spirits remains. The 360 gods of the Kaaba are gone; but the Kaaba and its guardian city, Mecca, are now made holier places and of greater resort than ever was dreamed by the most optimistic Koraichite.

This utter lack of originality was one of the chief reasons for the Islam's prompt success. There was so little to give up! The old religious notions of the Arab tribes were left for the most part unshaken. Even a converted Jew or Christian made the change with only a comparatively slight wrench. He could still consider Moses or Jesus to be the great prophets. He could still cherish most of the religious legends of his childhood. The Persian Zoroastrian found in Islam "the essential parts of his dogmas, his mythology and his cosmogony." Almost nowhere in Asia or Africa would the adoption of Islam involve in fact such a painful severance from the past as when, under the Roman Empire, a Greek or an Italian had determined to renounce his paternal gods and accept the worship of the crucified Nazarene.

Islam in any case made an extremely effective appeal to that great part of mankind which is very ignorant, and very willing to have some definite solution of "the riddle of existence" imposed upon it by authority. Islam did all of this "by the extreme precision of its dogma, the simplicity of its forms of worship and the practical character of its morality, which made very ample allowances for the passions and frailties of human nature." [Wahl.] In Islam there is no doctrine that man is so sinful that only by the mercy of God can he hope for salvation; no hard and seemingly impossible saying such as "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in

[6] The Persians undoubtedly contributed the vivid stories about the warfare of Allah and Iblis (Ahura-Mazda and Angra-Mainyu), also many details about the angels, devils, paradise, hell, etc.; especially the story of the bridge over the yawning gulf of hell which the just had to traverse in order to reach heaven.

heaven is perfect." According to their creed there have undoubtedly lived and died millions of absolutely righteous Moslems. Theology still denies there has been one perfectly righteous follower of Jesus.

Islam, therefore, under the existing military and political conditions of the early Middle Ages, was destined to be an enormous worldly success, once its founder had mastered the tribes of Arabia. It was destined, however, to lay a numbing hand upon the civilization of the Near East because of *the fatal rigidity of its dogmas, and of its legislation*—of beliefs and laws suitable at the time for the Arabs, but incapable of adjustment for the needs of advancing society, inasmuch as the dead letter of the Koran could not be escaped without repudiating Islam itself. As stated earlier, Mohammed brought to the world a new legal system; Jesus brought to the world a new attitude towards life. In the end the Christian interpretation of the cosmos proved far more capable than Mohammed's of confronting the tests of the advancing centuries; but for many generations the dictate of the Arabian camel-driver met the needs of a great part of mankind, and its potency has not vanished even to-day.

CHAPTER XI

THE FOUNDING OF THE SARACENIC EMPIRE

Abu-Bekr, the First Kalif. His Election (632) and Success

Mohammed had repeatedly warned his followers that he was only a mortal and must leave them. A verse in the Koran specifically asserted, "Thou too, Mohammed, shalt die even as others have died before thee." Nevertheless demoralization as well as grief prevailed in Medina when the tidings spread that the Prophet was no more. The latter had pretty clearly indicated his son-in-law and nephew Ali (a valiant and chivalrous Arab) as his successor, but he had laid down no definite rule. There was serious opposition to Ali, however; many of the old friends of Mohammed were jealous of him, and especially he was hated by Ayesha, the Prophet's favorite and very influential wife. He was therefore passed over. "Had Ali been accepted to the Headship of Islam, the birth of those disastrous pretensions that led to so much bloodshed in the Moslem world would have been averted." [Ameer Ali.] [1]

The old "Companions of the Prophet" chose, and the Medina populace accepted, an excellent leader—Abu-Bekr, a man of wisdom, moderation, and pronounced courage and energy—a man indeed to whom Mohammed owed much of his own worldly success. He had immediately to confront a crisis. Islam was still a very young creed in Arabia. The news of the death of Mohammed was promptly followed by open revolt and apostasy in many quarters, and by refusal to send tribute to Medina in many others. False prophets arose. For a little while it seemed as if Islam would perish with its founder.

Abu-Bekr never was daunted. He refused to hold back the army which his departed friend had been on the point of dispatching against the Romans. He raised new forces and entrusted them to Khalid, a ferocious soldier but a highly capable general, who stamped

[1] This author, a highly intelligent judge in the British-Indian courts, has made a valuable exposition of Islamic history from the modern Mohammedan standpoint.

out apostasy and rebellion in blood. The false prophet Mosailima was slain. All the peninsula bowed again five times a day towards Mecca according to the precepts of Mohammed.

The Nature of the Kalifate. Condition of the East Roman and Persian Empires

To understand the Kalifate ("Successorship" to the Prophet), it must be realized that here was no ordinary temporal monarchy. "The Mohammedan Empire was a religious society turned into a political one. Church and state, religion and loyalty, heresy and rebellion, were respectively in its case identical. A sedition, a revolution, a change of dynasty all took place on theological grounds." At first there was no standardized system for filling the supreme office. While Mohammed's trusted companions still lived the choice seemed obviously to rest with them and among them. It is after these have died off, or have become doddering elders, that the idea of a dynasty arises. We see a conventionalized Oriental Empire evolving out of what had begun as a "Republic" and a theocracy.

Mohammed had left a very specific mandate to his successors. "After us," he had said, "you will conquer Syria and Persia." Headlong religious zeal, a confidence that Allah was with them, and that earthly victory even more certainly than paradise was awaiting their members, doubtless fired these first armies of United Arabia. But it was not all blind fanaticism which governed the movements of Abu-Bekr and his great successor Omar. Bedouins had often served in both Roman and Persian armies; and at Medina, in 632, it must have been perfectly well known that the long grueling war between Heraclius and Chosroës II had left *both* of their wide-stretching empires wounded almost unto death.

In the East Roman Empire a great fraction of the Asiatic provinces had been trampled over by hostile armies, industry had nigh been ruined, commerce was stagnant. The imperial fiscus was more inexorable than ever in its demands. Two hundred thousand men in the professional army had been lost in the war, and had not been replaced. The sheiks of the important Arab auxiliaries who guarded the Syrian frontiers had been left to grumble unpaid. As has been seen (p. 32), in those regions also the religious policies of Constantinople had made the numerous Monothelite, Monophysite,

Jacobin and Nestorian "heretics" full of rage against the persecuting government. In Egypt, where the Coptic peasants almost to a man were "Jacobites," [2] there was even more pronounced disaffection.

If the state of East Rome was bad, that of Persia was worse. She had sacrificed terribly, yet had completely lost a great war. Her Zoroastrian official creed had been hard beset for many years to resist the destructive doctrines of Manicheism, a so-called religion which taught a grotesque combination of asceticism mingled apparently with orgiastic sensuality.[3] On the heels of the decisive defeat by Heraclius, the Persians had been plunged in one dynastic struggle after another following the death of Chosroës II. There were nine ephemeral "Great Kings" in the four years following the peace of Rome. The army lost all discipline and exhausted itself in civil wars. The satraps and the *dihgans* (great landowners) did each what was right in his own eyes. Perhaps if given a twenty-year respite, the Persians could have recovered from this anarchy, as more probably could have the East Romans. That respite was not to be granted.

Admirable Fighting Qualities of Early Islamic Armies. Fanaticism Scientifically Directed

Worldly wisdom plus the driving power of a tremendous fanaticism therefore directed the attack of the Bedouins at this moment of supreme opportunity.

It will not do to underestimate the sincere zeal of these champions of young Islam, even if for many the dream of plundering the rich Syrian or Babylonian towns was possibly more vivid than that of paradise. Said a certain chief, Zaid, upon refusing a high command, "It is the duty of a general to have a care for his own safety; but as for me I wish to fight and die martyr for the faith." And the historian Al Wakidi has put this sentiment in the mouth of a reckless Bedouin youth when he fought under the walls of Emesa: "Methinks I see the black-eyed girls looking upon me; any one of whom, should she appear in this world, all mankind would die for love of her. And I see in the hand of one of them a handkerchief of green silk and a cap of precious stones; and she beckons me and calls out

[2] The "Jacobites" were a special wing of the Monophysites who practically denied the human element in Jesus.

[3] This bizarre propaganda, which later found offshoots in the Albigenses of Mediæval France, seems to have begun with a Persian slave, Manes, who was burned alive by King Bahram in 274 A. D.

'Come thither quickly, for I love thee!'" Yet assuredly to thousands of Koraichites and men of Abu-Sofian's style of conversion the vista of great earthly booty and conquest was infinitely alluring. The whole spirit of the Moslem armies was summed up in the alleged words of their leaders in the decisive battle of Yermuk against the Romans:—*"Victory or Paradise is before you! The devil and hell fire are behind you! Charge!"*—and such a charge was not in vain.

For centuries the excellent fighting material of the Arabs had been uncontestable. Now for the first time they were able to combine themselves in large numbers. The stimulus of opportunity developed great strategists and tacticians among their chieftains. Such generals as Khalid, "The Sword of Allah"; Amr, the conqueror of Egypt, Moawia and Saad are among the high captains of military history. Strict discipline was maintained in the Moslem armies, booty was fairly and carefully distributed, and the desert hordes soon became organized into well articulated brigades and companies. Free from the cumbering traditions of older armies, the Arabs soon evolved new methods of attack, especially the combining of the use of their excellent cavalry with the preparatory fire of their equally excellent archers. If in the 1890's British regulars with magazine rifles and machine guns could barely withstand the headlong rush of the Mahdist dervishes, no great blame is to be attached to Roman and Persian troops who without superiority in weapons broke before the headlong sons of the desert.

Thanks to the *esprit de corps* of these Moslem armies there was an absence of those bitter rivalries between the chiefs which have been the ruin of so many Oriental undertakings. The orders of the Kalifs were implicitly obeyed. The redoubtable Khalid, the darling of the army, allowed himself to be superseded in command, and cheerfully served as lieutenant, declaring he "would obey a child if only the Kalif so commanded." With such armies and such commanders taking advantage of the given situation in Persia and Syria, there was nothing miraculous in what were undeniably remarkable military achievements.

Omar, the Second Kalif (634-644), the Organizer of Victory

Abu-Bekr (632-634) lived only long enough to put the new kalifate on a firm basis, to send forth its armies and to receive the reports

of important victories. At his death he left a specific request that another bosom friend of Mohammed, Omar, should be made Kalif. Once more Ali, with his peculiar family claims to consideration, was passed over. Omar (634-644) was, however, an excellent choice. The orders of campaign he issued to his generals were those of a great strategist who had an almost uncanny insight into the military situation. Although before his death treasure untold was being brought to Medina and placed at his disposal, he continued to lead, even as Abu-Bekr had done, a life of almost ostentatious simplicity. "He divided his time between preaching to the people and administering justice among them. He made his meal of barley and water on the steps of the mosque, and invited every one who passed by to partake."

Oft quoted is the tale of the Persian prince who surrendered on condition he should be taken to the Kalif himself. Conveyed to Medina, he put on his costly robes and diadem, then they led him to the courtyard of the mosque. An old man in a ragged cloak was asleep with his face against the shading wall. "Who may that fellow be?" demanded the satrap. "The Prince of True Believers!" came the answer. Omar awoke, rubbed his eyes, then commanded, "Strip him of these heathen garments and dress him as a Moslem." The prince was soon clad simply in an old linen shirt; after which, as the only means of saving his life, he professed his belief in one Allah and the Prophet, whereupon he was restored to his possessions and even awarded a pension.

Given these armies, these rulers and these wretched conditions among his foes, the details of the *Saracenic*[4] conquests may be omitted from an outline of history. The attack upon Rome and Persia went on simultaneously and for a good while with about equal success. After the first victories, when it became plain that vast worldly success and booty was being won, there was apparently little difficulty in enlisting a large part of the adult male population among the Bedouins for "the Way of Allah"—the *Djihad*. In both Persia and East Rome the governments committed the natural but grievous blunder of not taking the new peril from the deserts very seriously until it was too late. The older empires reckoned at the

[4] Probably it is best to describe the Moslem Empire, armies, etc., as *Saracenic* after they began to expand outside of Arabia, inasmuch as the term "Arabian" has too decidedly a local signification. Of course the actual meaning of the two terms is substantially the same.

outset on the subsidized Arab tribes close to their provinces, which had usually (against due payment) protected the civilized lands against raids from their remoter brethren. But as stated, lack of pay had cooled the loyalty of these Bedouins. Many of them were doubtless open to direct Islamic religious propaganda by men of their own race; many others were in no mood to risk their lives against raging fanatics in behalf of an alien and distant Great King or Basileus. As a result, despite occasional setbacks, all through the reign of Omar rare was the month when an exultant messenger did not spur into Medina with the tale of some new province conquered, some wealthy city won.

The Conquest of Syria. Battle of Yermuk (634 A. D.)

The tale of the conquest of the Roman and Persian lands was seen in the Saracenic historians through a veil of heroic romance. The writers of the defeated Christians did not add many reliable details; the overwhelmed Persian left no annalists to record the destruction of their country.

Taking the case of Syria first, it may be briefly stated that in 632 Abu-Bekr directed vigorous attacks upon the fringes of the Roman provinces where the Semitic influence was strong and Græco-Roman power weakest. A small Roman army (probably of Bedouin auxiliaries) was defeated and the important city of Bosra taken. By 634 the Saracens were attacking in greater force, aiming especially for Damascus, the most exposed of all the larger Syrian cities to assailants from the desert. Heraclius at length was truly alarmed as to the integrity of his Empire. A sizable Roman army was mobilized but it contained many ill-assorted and unsound elements. The Emperor was in failing health, and he was obliged to commit the leadership to incompetent generals. The invading Moslems and this imperial army met in decisive battle at the small river *Yermuk* which flows into the Lake of Tiberias (July 634 A. D.). Out of the glamor of legend, it becomes evident that the Romans fought long and not unworthily. The headlong rush of the Islamic fanatics was flung back time and time again, and the Armenian archers inflicted terrible punishment on the men from the deserts. But in the end an ambush of Arabs seems to have broken the close Roman ranks.

The imperialists were routed, many of them slain, and the remainder hopelessly dispersed.

This battle of Yermuk practically gave Syria to Mohammedanism. The Empire had lost its one available field army. Everywhere there prevailed slackness and faint-heartedness, if not downright rebellion against Heraclius. The Moslems readily promised religious toleration to the natives—what mattered it if the Syrian Christians preferred to go to Gehenna fires by following the errors of the "Jacobites" rather than those of the "Orthodox"? The invaders too were very ready to promise to require a very moderate tribute—less probably than was exacted by the insatiable agents from Constantinople. Only as the years advanced and the Islamic yoke settled into place, were the native Christians to learn what it was to be permanently under an Oriental line of despots, to whom they were mere "Infidels" —inferior tribute-payers, who might be accorded a contemptuous toleration, but never really complete justice and equality with the conquering people.[5]

Damascus fell soon after Yermuk. About a year later Baalbec and Hems (Emesa) were taken. The action of the Emperor now showed that Heraclius was losing his grip upon the situation. Instead of mobilizing another strong army, he hastened in person to Jerusalem and conveyed thence the precious relic of the "True Cross" to Constantinople. "Farewell Syria!" the desponding autocrat is alleged to have cried on quitting a province that had been Roman since the conquest by Pompeius. With the sovran showing such shaken courage, it was useless to expect desperate valor from his lieutenants. Soon Antioch capitulated, and not a few Syrians, fellow Semites with the conquerors, seem to have been willing to drop their veneer of Christianity and to confess Allah and the Prophet.

Capture of Jerusalem (637) and Invasion and Conquest of Egypt (640-642 A. D.)

By 637 the sacred city of Jerusalem itself was isolated and capitulated on condition that Kalif Omar should receive the surrender in person. Chroniclers delighted to record how this master of so many thousands of terrible sword hands, made the long journey from

[5] A sharp treatment of the Syrian Christians as inferiors probably did not begin until after 700 A. D.

Medina "mounted on a camel, with a sack of barley, a bag of dates, a wooden platter and a water-skin as his sole equipment and a solitary slave as his only escort." When he found that the victorious emirs had decked themselves in silken robes from the booty, he hurled stones at his generals. "Dare ye show yourselves to me while thus arrayed?" was his angry cry. However, Omar treated the Christians honorably, although their trembling patriarch murmured about the "abomination of desolation" being now in the holy place. The Kalif took pains to leave them their churches, and especially he secured the safety of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The fall of Jerusalem spurred the East Roman government into a last burst of energy. Another army was presently collected and sent into Syria under the crown-prince Constantine, but its leadership was poor, and a large part of the levies were induced to desert by an Arab raid into Mesopotamia, whence many of the Roman troops were drawn. The whole enterprise therefore collapsed. By 640 Syria was firmly in Islamic hands, from which it was never to be wrenched decisively until 1918.[6]

Egypt still pertained to the East Romans; but the country was now isolated from Constantinople by land, and was still more disaffected towards imperial rule than was Syria. The Copts of the Nile Valley hated the "Greeks" of Alexandria both for religious and racial reasons. Already in the days of the Persian war there had been evidence that Egypt was in danger of detaching herself from the Empire. Notwithstanding this situation Omar hesitated to send an army across the Sinai peninsula on a new adventure, while desperate fighting was still going on in Persia; but in 640 A. D. Amr—one of the ablest generals of early Islam—took a desperate chance with not more than 12,000 men. The Copts seem to have welcomed him with open arms, as the means to expel the hated "Greeks." Again there were lavish promises of religious toleration and easy tribute. Mukaulas, who appears to have been a kind of native ruler of the Copts, put all his vast influence at Amr's disposal. With the country then rising against them, the imperialist garrisons were thus presently forced back into Alexandria. This stronghold of Westernism did not succumb indeed without hard fighting; but no timely help came from Constantinople. The city capitulated to

[6] Of course the Crusades only affected the coastlands and accomplished nothing lasting.

Amr in 642.[7] Egypt was now completely in the power of the Saracens, and gradually, despite "toleration," the new faith supplanted Christianity with nine tenths of the population. The old "House of Bondage" thus continued under Islamic masters until the British intervention late in the nineteenth century.

Conquest of Persia. Battles of Kedesia (636) and Nehavend (642)

While Rome was being cut short, Persia was being destroyed. As early as 632 the Bedouins began their raids into those parts of the Great King's dominions nearest to their deserts—"Irak," the region of the old Babylonia. Babylon itself had sunk in ruin along with most of the other hoary cities of "Sumer and Akkad," but others had risen in their places and the great irrigation system which had made the land a garden since primæval times was still intact. The "lean and hungry warriors from the south" must have wondered as at a mirage, at this region of "populous and clustering brown mud villages, the olive-green stretches of ripening corn, the vast groves of palms, the rigid, direct and well-controlled canals, the mighty towers, and the gleaming palaces of the cities moulded from plastic cement, the evident signs of intense and elaborate cultivation."

The Saracens, of course, did not overrun this country, much less subdue the great hinterland of Persia proper beyond the Zagros mountains, without desperate fighting and some reverses. Yezdedgerd, the "Great King," however, whom the Persian nobles had at last agreed to support upon the throne, was of anything but heroic mold. In 636,[8] after preliminary invasions and repulses, there was a great battle at Kedesia near Hira betwixt Rustam, the best Persian general, and Saad, the Kalif's emir. Three days, according to the narrative, the struggle swayed to and fro in indecisive carnage. The Iranian cavalry charged gallantly and was a fair match for the desert horse. But in the nick of time reënforcements came to the Moslems. The Persians sent their war-elephants against the hostile lines, but the unwieldy beasts were goaded into turning upon their own side. All night long lasted the final encounter, but at the dawn the Rustam was slain, the sacred standard of his king taken by

[7] It seems needless to refute again the old legend that Amr destroyed the great Alexandrian library. It had probably been dispersed centuries earlier.

[8] This battle may have been in 635. We have to use very unscientific chroniclers.

the Saracens and his army scattered from the field in hopeless rout.

The Moslems therefore were able to cross the Tigris, to take the Persian capital of Ctesiphon and to consolidate their power in the Tigro-Euphrates valley. In the mountains of old Elam and eastward, the Great King, however, still had many stout warriors. Another great effort was made. Yezdedgerd gave the command to his last competent general, the elderly Firouzan, "the man with joined eyebrows." In 642 came the final battle of Nehavend. Once more the rush of the Bedouins carried all before them. Firouzan fell with Rustam on the field of honor; but his country was lost. The unhappy Yezdedgerd for several years more spent the life of a fugitive, fleeing like Darius III from city to city and satrapy to satrapy in the northeast of his falling dominions. The resisting power of the Persians now seemed broken. In not many years after Nehavend, Saracenic generals were carrying the message "Islam or the sword" into the steppes of Turkestan beyond the fabled Oxus; were attempting the mountain passes of the Hindu-Kush, "the Roof of the World"; were building mosques in Herat, in Merv and Kandahar, and were crossing swords with the Indian rajahs of Sind. Like conquest there has not been since the days of Alexander the son of Philip.

These later glories Omar, the wise and virtuous Kalif, did not live to see. In 644 he was murdered by a Christian carpenter actuated by a private grudge. Islam owed him much. Acting really as a great war minister he had created a mighty empire. After him Saracen armies were still to win amazing victories and annex new kingdoms, but the heroic age of Mohammedanism was over. Moslem was about to turn his blade against fellow Moslem.

CHAPTER XII

THE FIRST STRUGGLE FOR THE KALIFATE. THE OMIAD DYNASTY AT DAMASCUS (661-750 A. D.)

OTHMAN, THE THIRD KALIF: HIS UNFORTUNATE REIGN (644-656 A. D.)

Probably both Abu-Bekr and Omar were wiser guides for Islam than would have been the magnanimous, affectionate but by no means equally stable and worldly wise son-in-law of the Prophet, Ali. But for other reasons the "husband of Fatima" had been personally unpopular with many other influential "Companions" and once more, in 644 B. C., after the murder of Omar, he was thrust aside. This time it could not be claimed the disposing magnates made a superior choice. Othman (644-656) was indeed "virtuous and honest, but he was very old and feeble in character and quite unequal to the task of government." He was soon completely under the influence of his family. His secretary, Merwan, was a slippery, self-seeking man whom Mohammed himself had once disciplined, and who now gained vast power over the pliable Kalif. Ali submitted to this new slight out of patriotism and devotion to the cause, but bad blood was brewing. The days of the "Republic," as the primitive, austere, elective Kalifate has been styled, were running out; the days of dynasties and of the standard vicissitudes of a great Oriental monarchy were at hand.

Already in Othman's reign the Saracens were disposing of an enormous empire. Almost every head of a Bedouin war band had become "emir" (regent) over what one day had been a good-sized province. Wealth untold was flowing towards Medina. If the joys of martyrdom were postponed, the True Believers were at least being seduced in this world with all the luxuries of Egypt, Syria and Iran. Men who had begun life as goatherds and petty bandits were now enduring that acid test of the mighty, unbounded temporal success. What wonder that strange motives crept in to warp the devout

purposes of the veterans of Bedr? What wonder, too, that the ranks of Islam were swelled by myriads of non-Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians, Persians, Jews;—who found their native religions sitting lightly, when, by merely raising a finger and repeating the Moslem "confession," they instantly became members of a conquering army that was able to reward its soldiers with inconceivable lavishness.

The subjugated provinces, furthermore, had to be administered. To be able to win a battle did not make an emir into a learned civil governor able to handle intricate problems of commercial jurisprudence and public finance. It was necessary, therefore, to keep the old Roman or Persian laws and arrangements so far as they did not directly conflict with the Koran. Sometimes the new administrators were non-Arabian Moslems of very recent conversion. Sometimes they had to be steadfast Christians, or Jews, indispensable to their new masters. In any case from the very beginning of Othman's reign, the *non-Arabian element* is increasingly evident in Saracenic armies and governments. It was the old story of the victory of the vanquished. Islam could overrun the Near East, but the Bedouins, the true people of the Prophet, could not in the long run escape the consequences of their inferior civilization. Within a century after the first Saracenic invasions, although the Kalifs were ruling an enormous empire, in that empire the genuine Arabian element was sinking steadily into relative insignificance.

The dynastic history of the Kalifate is important to modern readers only in its broadest outlines. Othman by his weakness, incompetence and favoritism provoked disaffection in Arabia and growing insubordination among his lieutenants. Persia was of course annihilated. The Eastern Empire was temporarily very feeble. There was no formidable power to check the expansion of Islam towards the East or across North Africa, the more especially as the movement now gathered strength like a rolling snow-ball—every new conquest, with its inevitable mass of conversions, providing a new set of ardent fanatics very anxious to win the secular rewards of the *djihad*. But at Medina matters presently drifted from fury to rebellion. In 656, worn out by the failure of the senile Othman to curb the misrule of his favorites,[1] a furious band stormed his residence and murdered the eighty-two-year-old Kalif.

[1] Othman's enemies cried out against his misrule: "Omar put his foot upon the necks of all them that served him; thou hast given them the bridle!"

Ali Becomes Kalif (656-661 A. D.). Rebellion Against Him; He is Murdered

Ali was now promptly proclaimed Kalif at Medina (656-661 A. D.), but from the outset all his enemies charged him with inciting if not actually assisting in the uprising which destroyed Othman. Instantly there came refusals from the provinces to accept his authority. He was defied by many in Arabia, but especially by Moawia, that astute son of the old foe of the Prophet, Abu-Sofian, who had now, by sheer worldly ability, become viceroy of Syria. Moawia was also sustained by Amr, the great conqueror of Egypt. Ali thus had on his hands a very serious civil war. He was supported indeed by many elements in the army and by the Mesopotamian provinces. When certain Bedouin chiefs were joined by the militant Ayesha, "the Mother of the Faithful," and rose against him, Ali defeated and slew the male leaders and consigned Ayesha to honorable captivity. But Moawia by skillful propaganda undermined the loyalty of his troops when he tried to march on Syria, and very many pious Moslems hampered him by demanding "arbitration" when the issue was between "brothers" within Islam. Moawia now openly proclaimed himself kalif, and in 661 A. D. Ali (already in extremely serious difficulties) was struck down by a fanatic while he was at public prayer in the mosque at Kufa.[2] Thus perished "The Lion of Allah," a man whose chivalry, humanity and personal valor have become part of the romance of Islam, and who as Masudi (a Saracenic historian) asserts was of such worth that "we shall search in vain to find among his predecessors, save one [Mohammed, of course], or among his successors, those virtues with which Allah had endowed him."

Ali left by Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, three sons, but Hassan, the eldest, was a weak, retiring man who was no match for the military skill and supple diplomacy of Moawia. Deserted by many of his father's friends, Hassan made a pact with the great emir

[2] Kufa was a city in Southern Babylonia which became a kind of local capital of the Moslems immediately after their first conquest of the region.

According to a story of the times, three devout Moslems had met to discuss the woes of Islam. They agreed that peace could only return if the three leaders of factions—Ali, Moawia and Amr—were *all* impartially done away with. Each fanatic selected a victim and, after exchanging suitable vows, the three parted and went their several ways. The attempts on Moawia and Amr failed, although Moawia was seriously wounded. Ali's assassin alone prospered. The result of the conspiracy was therefore to deliver Islam over to the Emir of Syria.

of Syria, abdicated and retired to Medina. Moawia thereupon by general consent became Kalif (661-680 A. D.), and "thus did the persecutors of Mohammed [the kindred of Abu-Sofian] usurp the inheritance of his children, and the champions of idolatry became the supreme heads of his religion and empire."

Moawia (661-680 A. D.) Founds the Omiad Dynasty, with Damascus as Capital

Moawia promptly transferred the capital of the Saracenic Empire from Medina to Damascus, thus indicating a profound change in the whole spirit and government of the Islamic dominions. He also used his power to secure the Kalifate for his own family, the *"Omiads"* ("House of Omiah"), as practically a hereditary possession, and from 661 to 750 the Omiad Kalifs posed as supreme over a large fraction of the known world.

It is not profitable to study the dynastic history of these rulers of Damascus. Steadily in the eighty-nine years of their government the strictly *Arabian* element in their Empire dwindled; the predominant class became increasingly Syrian, Semites indeed, but Semites who had long escaped from the desert. The administration took on the familiar pomp and circumstance of an ordinary Oriental empire. The main characteristics of the "Saracenic" polity and administration are best traced in the next chapter, when under the Abbassides the Islamic capital was more securely fixed at Bagdad. To understand this Omiad period it is therefore needful merely to note certain general tendencies and one or two major events.

Moawia lived and reigned until 680 A. D. He had been very unscrupulous in winning his way to power, but once having become Kalif he was intelligent enough to prove a just as well as an astute administrator. By the time he died all the reins of government seemed centered in the hands of the Omiad princes. Moawia was able to transmit his power to his son, Yezid (680-684), a man of far coarser and more tyrannous stamp. After him, however, the succession in the dynasty was soon complicated by the failure of the Arabian customary law to provide strict rights of primogeniture. Instead of the oldest son, *the oldest male in the family* was usually to have the prior claims to the Kalifate. This led to the candidacies of brothers and uncles; to harem intrigues among the imperial

women and eunuchs to advance or destroy an aspirant to power; in short, to endless friction and to not a few conspiracies and crimes within the reigning clan. The story of the house of Omiah reads like that of the royal houses of Old Persia, Parthia, or many another Eastern kingdom. Some of the despots are men of ability; some are cruel weaklings sunken in ignoble luxury; practically all are silken-robed Emperors served with fear by "slaves" rather than by subjects, and studiously forgetful of the days when their not remote ancestors had convoyed strings of camels returning from Syria to Mecca, or traded cattle at the fair held hard by the idols of the Kaaba.

Hussein, Son of Ali, Massacred at Kerbala (680 A. D.). Origin of the Shiah Sect

A great fraction of Islam continued to regard the house of Ali and Fatima as the only lawful dynasty. Moawia had allowed his rival's children to live comfortably in Medina. In 680, however, soon after the death of the first Omiad Kalif, various intrigues induced Hussein (Ali's second and more enterprising son) to proceed to Irak, lured on by large promises that the city of Kufa would rise in his behalf. The men of Kufa, however, had gained an evil reputation for instability; "They knew not their own minds from day to day. One moment they were as ardent as fire, the next as cold as ice and as indifferent as the dead."

Hussein was accompanied by some of his women and children and by a very small band of followers. On nearing Kufa he found himself utterly deceived and betrayed by those who had promised to aid him. His handful was attacked by an overwhelming Omiad force, pelted with arrows, cut off from water; and at last, after heroic resistance and vain offers to surrender, he was slain while his young sons and nephews were perishing around him, one babe being slaughtered in his arms. The exulting victors carried his head to Kufa, where it was smitten upon the mouth with bludgeons. "Alas!" cried an aged Moslem, "on those lips have I seen the lips of the Apostle of Allah!"

This "martyrdom of Kerbala" was a calamity for all Islam. Though the Omiads continued long in power they could never escape the odium of having slaughtered the grandson of the Prophet. A great faction of dissidents exalted Hussein into a kind of supreme

saint, little inferior in holiness to Mohammed himself;—and to this day the great *Shiah* sect (to which nearly all Persia belongs) execrates the rest of Islam (the Sunnites) because, since the latter count the Omiads to be lawful Kalifs, the Shiahs consider them sharers in the guilt for the blood of one whom a great minority of Moslems almost idolatrously reckons to be little less than a demigod.

The massacre at Kerbala was presently followed by a great revolt which nearly shook the Omiad power. Abdallah, son of Zobeir (one of the old companions of Mohammed), set himself up as Kalif and for the moment "Irak," Mesopotamia and Egypt as well as Arabia obeyed him. But he lacked the disciplined army, full treasury and corps of devoted officials now at the disposal of the Damascus government. By hard fighting the revolt was put down. The Omiads sent their forces directly against the "Holy Cities." Medina was taken, many of the populace were massacred, and Syrian cavalrymen stabled their horses within the Prophet's own mosque. Mecca succumbed in 692, when Abdallah was slain during a siege in which the Kaaba was breached by war engines and gutted by fire. This was practically the end of the "Old Believers"—of the hoary-headed men who had known the Prophet, and of their immediate descendants. Henceforth Arabia counted for little politically. Medina and Mecca were still sacred places of pilgrimage—but secular power and the courses of civilization had passed again away from the great desert-locked peninsula.

Conquest of Africa by the Saracens

III. While these things were happening at home, the Moslem armies were still conquering afar. Every Emir felt bound to extend the boundaries of Islam. He could seldom content his troops unless he supplied constant excitement and plunder.

As already remarked the new converts were usually more anxious for "the Way of Allah" than were their more sated brethren long in the faith. During the second half of the seventh century the Moslems were fighting their way across North Africa. The Arab leaders found themselves in a country not unlike Arabia itself—vast reaches of desert to southward with strips of fertile coastland strung along the sea. The imperial garrisons holding the coastal cities were not strong enough really to impede them, but they were

not welcomed by the valiant Moors, who were now throwing off the Roman yoke, and slipping back from a feeble type of Christianity into sheer paganism. Had the Moors been united the Saracens would have been blocked completely. As it was the native tribes were beaten down one by one. Once vanquished, however, the Moors had little objection to accepting Islam. They were a people ethnically different indeed from the Arabs, but not at all unlike them in personal characteristics, social customs and general viewpoint. The simple dogmas and legislation of Islam met their needs exactly. *A great reënforcement was thus won for Mohammedanism,* even a "second Arabia." Thanks to the conquest of North Africa, Islam thus gained a new horde of fanatics in a position to carry the Koran directly across the Mediterranean into the lands of the North.

The Conquest of Spain by the Arab-Moors (711-720 A. D.)

IV. The Conquest of Spain by the "Arab-Moors" is an episode over which a student of the Near East dare not linger. Let a bare statement of the threadbare facts suffice. In 696 Hassan-ben-Noman took Carthage from the Romans. By 708 his successor, the Emir Mousa, had annexed all of northwest Africa north of the Sahara, save only the Ceuta, then held by "Count Julian," the governor for the Visigothic king of Spain, who, however, was at odds with his suzerain, and who now incited the Moslems to invade Europe.

The king of Spain, Roderick, was by common report a tyrannous usurper. In his disordered realm the great nobles (scions of the old Roman Senatorial class and of the Gothic conquerors) held their serfs in such harsh bondage that the latter were in no mood to fight to defend an oppressive government. The cities were misruled, impoverished, and dwindling; the numerous Jews complained of grievous persecution; the bishops were too often self-seeking secular lords of a class with the nobles. Such an ill-compacted kingdom had probably only been able to last thus long, thanks to its isolated position; and it obviously presented every temptation to the throngs of North African converts anxious for a new and profitable *djihad.*

In 711 Mousa allowed his lieutenant Tarik to land in the extreme south of Spain (Gibraltar = "Djebel Tarik" = "Mount of Tarik")

with a force of barely 12,000 Moslems, whereof probably not more than 300 had ever seen Arabia. Small as this army was, it sufficed to defeat the hastily assembled levies of Roderick in a great "Homeric" battle of "Xeres" (more properly of Medina Sidonia) not far from Cape Trafalgar. The wretched Christian serfs fought very slackly. Some of Roderick's lieutenants were traitors. The whole Visigothic army was presently routed, and their king drowned in his flight in the waters of the Guadalete.[3] This one battle put all Spain at the mercy of the invaders. Resistance henceforth was piecemeal and crumbled rapidly. The promises of tolerance and of moderate taxation usually reconciled the natives to a prompt capitulation. Tarik's conquest was indeed so rapid that Mousa was angered when he crossed to Europe because so little appeared left for him to do.

By 720 all Spain seemed subjugated, barring the rugged mountains to the north and west against the tossing Bay of Biscay and the more stormy Atlantic. Here indeed the remnants of the Visigoths turned at bay, and according to venerable legend "raised on their shields" that Pelayo, who became first "King of Asturias," and began the long, oft-halted process of the "Christian Recovery of Spain." But for the nonce the victorious Arab-Moors ignored this puny survival. Mousa, to be sure, was recalled by a suspicious Kalif, but other competent emirs continued to push northward.

Battle of Tours (732 A. D.). The Moslems Halted in Europe

In 721 the Pyrenees had been crossed, and a great band of Islamic adventurers dashed themselves on Toulouse. These first attacks into Aquitaine were repulsed, but soon the horde of Levantines, Moors, and Christian renegades came northward yet again with the rich fields of old Gaul spreading enticingly before them. By 725 their raiding cavalry was penetrating as far as Burgundy. By 731 Eudes, the valiant duke of Aquitaine, had been defeated, and Bordeaux, his capital, sacked by the Infidel. Finally in 732 a very competent emir, Abd-ur-Rahman, led the great host of True Believers into the heart of the Christian country, aiming this time to

[3] This is the common account. Another theory makes Roderick survive the battle for some little time. In any case he certainly did nothing further effectual to stop the Moslems. The whole story of the "Conquest of Spain" is of course half lost in the mists of legends.

reach the Loire and sack the wealthy shrine of St. Martin of Tours. But on a plain betwixt Tours and Poitiers this army of the Prophet met with a new foe—Charles, the Major Domus of the Franks,[4] and his full levy of tall Northern axemen. The Numidian horse and their Arabian generals had never before ridden against such a "wall of ice." Abd-ur-Rahman was slain. His men fled southward in headlong panic. Frankland and Western Christendom was saved from Islam, even as fifteen years earlier the repulse of Moslemah at Constantinople had saved New Rome for civilization.

There were still Moslem garrisons north of the Pyrenees for the next twenty years, but the danger of new invasions into Frankland soon passed. The Omiad Empire at length was getting into sore difficulties and was losing its aggressiveness. In 750 A. D. it fell before the victorious Abbassides.

[4] Charles, of course, gained his famous epithet "Martel" ("The Hammer") as a result of this victory. If the Arab-Moors had defeated him they would hardly have pushed at once much farther into the North. They would probably, however, have completed the conquest of South Gaul, then have invaded Italy with every prospect of success.

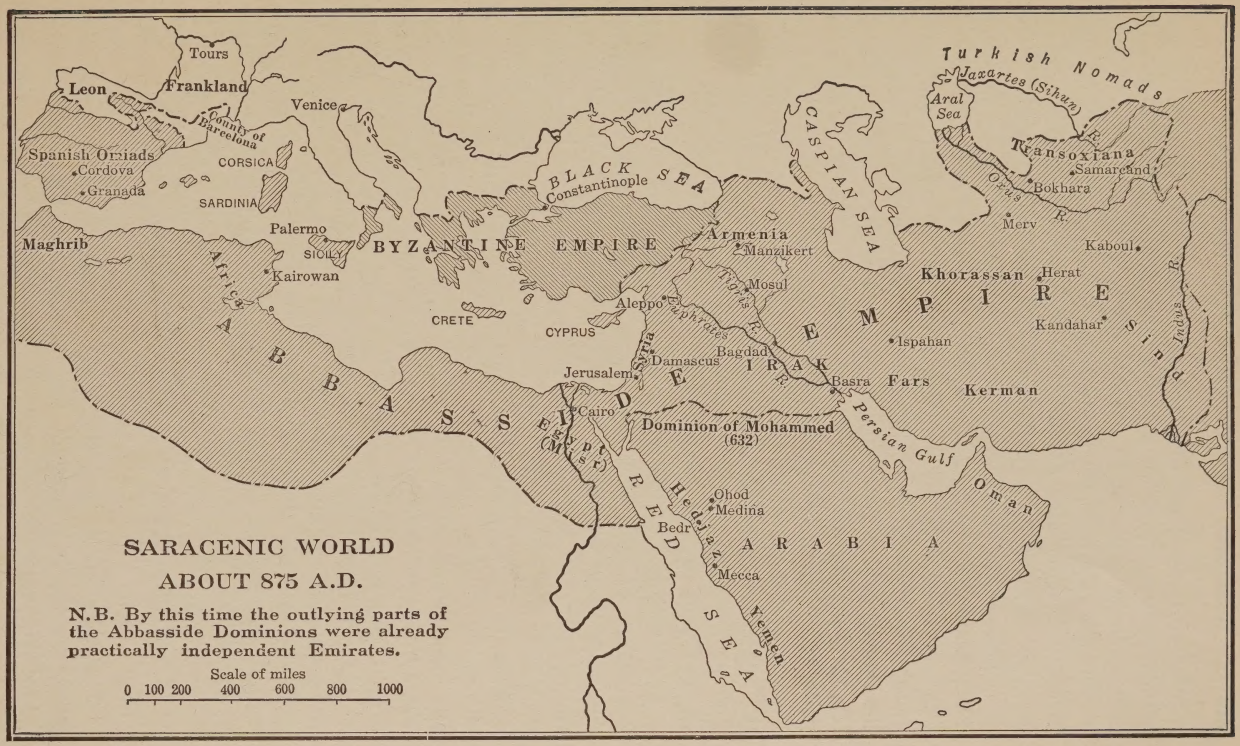
CHAPTER XIII

THE ABBASSIDE KALIFATE AT BAGDAD (750-1258 A. D.). DESTRUCTION BY THE MONGOLS

The Saracenic Empire After Its Establishment

In 750 A. D. the Saracenic Empire covered an enormous area from the river mouths of Lusitania to the coasts of the Aral Sea and the banks of the Indus. More square miles were under the "Commander of the Faithful", than had ever been under Darius the Great or Cæsar Augustus; and probably more than there are to-day within the home territories of the United States. But this huge dominion from the first was uncentralized, poorly controlled, spongy. The Kalifs endeavored to name the provincial emirs and to remove or behead them if they did not prove reasonably obedient, but they could seldom interfere in the local administration. The Koran and its laws were indeed carried everywhere. Arabic became the sacred and official language. The Saracenic social institutions and code of morality usually prevailed, and the whole Empire tended to assume a common cultural aspect: but a centralized body of obedient officials was something every Kalif sighed for in vain. Long before the fall of the Omiads it became a serious matter for the Damascus government to remove the emir of an important province without first taking many precautions, or often even to refuse to appoint the most eligible son of such an emir to the viceroyalty, in event of his father's decease.

The Moslems had now lost their headlong fanaticism. The grandsons of the conquerors, pompous lords who lived no longer on the verge of the desert, thought far less of the joys of the Holy War and the black-eyed houris than of their own comfortable villas and overstocked harems. The Byzantine Basileus had left to him far smaller dominions than were possessed by the Kalif, but the Basileus disposed of his subjects' property and of his officials' doings as could no Kalif. As has been seen, in the centuries following the great



SARACENIC WORLD
ABOUT 875 A.D.

N.B. By this time the outlying parts of the Abbasside Dominions were already practically independent Emirates.

Scale of miles

0 100 200 400 600 800 1000

repulse of the Omiads by Leo the Isaurian the fortunes of war gradually swung back in favor of the Christian Empire—largely because of its firmer and more scientific organization.

National consciousness, too, was reasserting itself here and there in the vast, lumbering Saracenic dominions. Under the shock of invasion, followed by a pretty active persecution of paganism,[1] the great bulk of the Persians had professed Islam: but they could not amalgamate with the Semitic conquerors. Persian Mohammedanism was soon marked by an intense devotion to the memory and cause of the House of Ali—something highly objectionable, of course, to the Omiads of Damascus. In Egypt and especially in North Africa, too, there presently developed "non-orthodox" sects, which under the guise of a variant opinion concerning the sundry teachings of the Prophet and the legal title of his successors, often really expressed the reluctance of the newer converts to merge their nationality with that of Arabia, or rather (considering the nature of the Omiad régime) with that of Syria.

The difficulties of the Kalifs were increased also by the steady conversions of great numbers of the subject Christians to Islam. Although there was fairly complete official toleration under the Omiads for the "Peoples of the Books," every kind of inducement from mere dislike of tribute and of a despised social status to hopes of securing a great public office were producing steady accessions to the official religion. In Egypt so many Christians apostatized that the Moslem authorities took alarm. How fill the treasury? For True Believers could not be taxed like Infidels!—Somewhat the same things were going on in Syria. The genuine Arabs became simply a privileged minority; rapidly diluted in blood by polygamy and soon swamped by "New Believers." Well was it said that "the conquest absorbed the conquerors." By the middle of the eighth century this process was able to assert itself by producing a change of dynasty.

Rise and Triumph of the Abbassides, 750 A. D. The Revival of Persia.

The adherents of the Alids made repeated but vain attempts to substitute the "Children of the Prophet" for the hated sons of

[1] The Zoroastrians, being downright "idolaters," could receive no such degree of toleration as the Christians and Jews were granted under Islamic law.

Abu-Sofian. All these fierce efforts were stamped out in blood but they served to keep alive the prevailing discontent. Meantime another and more worldly-wise intrigue had been started against the Omiads. The descendants of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, claimed in one sense to be as truly the heirs of Mohammed as their Alid kinsmen. The propaganda of these "Abbassides" was conducted with great skill. They persuaded the supporters of Ali that the triumph of their two houses would go together, and the Kalifate was presently honeycombed with intrigues, especially in the eastern emirates. The Omiad authorities flung some of the Abbasside chiefs into dungeons, but they could not secure the real brains of the conspiracy. Finally in the reign of the Damascus Kalif, Merwan II (744-750 A. D.), these patient plottings came to a head.

Merwan II was of higher character and ability than most of the earlier Omiad despots, yet his governors for long sent to Damascus vain warnings against the growing danger. Wrote the distressed Emir of Khorassan, "I see sparks gleaming under the ashes: from them may spring a great fire. . . . Why must I ask if the children of Omiah are awake, or if leaders' sleep has sealed their eyes?" Merwan, at length, indeed took vigorous steps, but already the danger was beyond control. The Abbassides began their rebellion near the distant Bactrian city of Merv, unfurling their ominous "black banner" and raising their battle cry "The Family of the Prophet." All the old Persian lands rose at their bidding. Merwan seized Ibrahim, the nominal chief of the movement, and sent him to the executioner, but the Abbasside command passed to his brother, Abul-Abbas "The Bloody," a man of ruthless energy, and assisted by a very competent general, Abu-Muslim. The war which followed was really between Mohammedanized Persia and Mohammedanized Syria. The rest of Islam stood neutral, or at least gave neither side effective assistance. Merwan had the advantage of a disciplined regular army and the control of the governmental machinery, but valor, national feeling and personal genius were on the side of his foes. In 750, on the River Zab in Old Assyria, thirty miles from the crumbling mounds of Nineveh, Persian Indo-Europeans fought it out with Syrian Semites. The Persians won after a long hard battle. Many of Merwan's host were drowned in the Zab, while the remainder scattered. Merwan's power col-

lapsed instantly. There seemed no love or loyalty for the Omiads left in all the Near East. This last Kalif of the house of Moawia was accordingly chased down to Egypt in a Coptic Church where he had sought refuge, and then promptly decapitated.

The First Abbasside Kalifs (750-775 A. D.)

Abul-Abbas was pitiless in his ragings against the fallen dynasty. Every male scion of the great polygamous clan, including many who were mere "friends" of the same, were proscribed and slaughtered. The tombs of the Omiads were shattered and desecrated. Finally an amnesty was proclaimed. Seventy wretched Omiad princes, drawn from hiding by this promise of safety, showed themselves. "The Bloody" promptly slew them. Then at last Abul-Abbas's heart had rest. The entire Islamic empire acknowledged his dread sway, save only distant Spain—whither Abd-ur-Rahman, a prince of the blood of Moawia, first contrived, after romantic adventures, to escape, and then to persuade the Moslems of that ill-attached emirate to accept him as their independent ruler, and to beat off all attempts of the Abbassides to possess the country.

Abul-Abbas enjoyed his bloodily bought throne four years (750-754). He was only thirty-three years of age when he was cut short in a career that might have led to many more acts of pitiless energy. In his place reigned his brother *Mansur* (754-775), ordinarily reckoned the first of the "great" Abbasside Kalifs.

Mansur frankly dismissed any serious attempt to recover Spain from Abd-ur-Rahman. His hold also on Moorish Africa was very nominal. He owed his throne to a frank assertion of the claims of the eastern provinces of Islam, and he resolved not indeed to transfer his government clear to Persia but to move the capital away from Syria (the seat of Omiad power), and decidedly more towards the east. Islam thus became more strictly an *Oriental* religion and civilization than ever, when Mansur founded on the banks of the Tigris his new capital—Bagdad.

The Founding and Magnificence of Bagdad

The genuine fame of the seat of the Abbassides is sometimes imperiled by the very glamour of fable which has surrounded the

early centuries of this still important city. A scrutiny of the more authentic accounts which come to us of Bagdad under its first masters confirms, however, the traditional impression that here, on the site of a summer park of the Sassanid kings, there arose a capital only a little less populous and pretentious than Constantinople. Mansur mobilized the resources of a mighty Empire to create his city even as had Constantine to create New Rome, and efficient despotism can accomplish much. The location chosen on the whole was excellent. So long as the ancient, irrigating system was maintained in the lower Tigro-Euphrates valley so long that region was one populous, fertile garden, and demanded a great city for its center. Babylon, Seleucia, Ctesiphon had followed one another, and now—not much removed from their sites—came Bagdad to be the metropolis of a new type of civilization but upon very venerable soil.

As originally designed Mansur's city was supposed to form a perfect circle, four miles in circumference, surrounded by three concentric walls of huge sun-dried bricks. In the center stood the Kalif's palace, called "The Golden Gate," and hard by the same was the Great Mosque. The whole surrounding area, enclosed by the inner wall, was reserved for government buildings and for the palaces of the imperial family. No one save the Kalif might ride on horseback into these sacred precincts. The space betwixt the inner and middle wall was given over to the humbler dwellings of the citizens, and to their shops and industries. The middle wall itself rose to a vast height "with iron gates so heavy a company was required to open them." There was an open space between this wall and the outer bulwark, which seems to have been weaker than the middle wall, but which was protected by a deep flooded moat.

Bagdad was substantially completed by 766, although inevitably, as the city grew rapidly, its plan was changed. Suburb was added to suburb. The kiosks and pleasure parks extended themselves on both sides of the Tigris for many miles northward and southward. During the sieges which the city underwent in the civil wars of the ninth century, many of Mansur's buildings received such damage that the whole center of Bagdad was presently shifted to a point considerably south of the outskirts of the original city. But although Kalifs warred often with pretenders, although outlying

emirates might fall away and Turkish "Protectors" might reduce the Commander of the Faithful to little more than a Mohammedan high pontiff, down to the middle of the thirteenth century Bagdad continued to be the largest and wealthiest city in the Islamic East. The enforced growth of population brought commerce. It is alleged that Chinese junks as well as dhows from the African coasts and from the Malay Peninsula and Islands rode at its quays along the swift Tigris. The population in its streets was probably even more cosmopolitan than that of Constantinople, with presumably a greater proportion of persons from the remoter parts of the East, although far fewer Christians and Europeans.

The Glittering Court of the Kalifs

Thus is the aspect of the Kalif's court described when Moktader (908-932 A. D.) received a Byzantine ambassador, in an epoch when already the Saracenic power was on the wane. Writes Abulfeda, "The Kalif's entire host, horse and foot, was under arms—160,000 men. His state officers and favorite slaves stood near him in glorious apparel, their belts glittering with gold and gems. Near by these stood 7000 eunuchs, whereof 4000 were white, the remainder were black. The porters or doorkeepers [of the imperial compound] were 700. Barges and boats, extraordinarily magnificent in decorations, floated on the Tigris. The palace itself was not less splendid. It was hung about with 38,000 pieces of tapestry; 12,500 whereof were of silk embroidered with gold. Twenty-two thousands carpets adorned the floors. A hundred lions were led forth, a keeper beside each. Among other surprising rarities was a tree of gold and silver spreading itself in eighteen branches, whereon, and upon the twigs, sat birds wrought of the same precious metals as were the leaves of the tree. When machinery was put in motion, the birds warbled as though they were alive. Through all this splendor the vizier led the Greek ambassador up to the Kalif's throne."

Oriental figures are always subject to remarkable deductions. Abulfeda, though a conscientious writer, and usually using good sources, was by no means a contemporary of Moktader,[2] nevertheless the whole impression conveyed is that the "Arabian Nights" have hardly done injustice to the original glories of Bagdad. We

[2] He wrote about 1300 A. D. and was a native of Damascus. With all his limitations he was no despicable historian.

know, indeed, by abundant evidence that in its heydey the Kalif's court was "an Oriental Versailles," full of great lords, courtiers, poets, theologians, minstrels, eunuchs and petitioners, and that on the verges of the "stately pleasure domes" of majesty, with their halls of marble, of magnificent stucco-work or faience, there stretched wide gardens and parks, full of fragrant flower-beds and murmuring fountains, and scattered with "secret pavilions and perfumed retreats" for the fortunate friends of the mighty. Contrasted with this would, of course, be the tokens of filth, tawdriness and sensuality inseparable from the Orient;—but which here in Bagdad would possess nothing unique.

Power and Wealth of the Abbasside Kalifs

Mansur thus established a new dynasty in a new capital. The Abbasside Kalifate lasted far longer than the Omiads, but within a hundred years it began to show such signs of weakness that such neighbors as the Byzantines ceased greatly to dread it. From the outset the power of the Kalifs rested, so far as the outlying provinces were concerned, not on cheerful allegiance but on force. When the dread of that force dwindled the political allegiance dwindled also, although many emirs, long after they exhibited profound contempt for the orders of Bagdad, ostentatiously permitted public prayer to be offered in their mosques for the "spiritual" head of Islam—as though the Abbasside were a kind of titular Pope.[3] However, for some little time the house of Mansur was obeyed with reasonable completeness in Khorassan (remoter Persia), Irak (nearer Persia and Mesopotamia), Syria and Egypt. A grasping taxation system swept in an enormous revenue. About 800 A. D. it amounted, it is alleged, to 530 million dirhams (some $100,000,000) per annum, although this vast income seems to have dwindled to a far more modest figure during the ninth century, and by 915 A. D. the whole income of the Kalif is set at no more than 24 million dirhems (say $4,500,000). Internal and dynastic troubles, constant wars, the dishonesty of the viceroys and treasury officers, the spendthrift luxury of the court—all these were causes for this sorrowful diminution, as well as the actual secession of great tribute-paying provinces.

[3] The Sultan of Turkey is of course thus prayed for as Kalif in the mosques of India, the Malay Islands, etc., even to-day.

Mansur, a Typical Oriental Despot

The dynastic history of the Abbassides need not detain one long. Oriental imperial houses run a pretty standardized course, and the Lords of Bagdad were no exception. Mansur was a gilded despot who threw away the last vestiges of the Bedouin simplicity that had been allowed to linger at Damascus. His Persian supporters were willing not merely to grovel before him as had their forefathers before Xerxes, but a sect of them actually adored him as incarnation of Allah himself. This the Kalif dared not endure. It would have meant the revolt of every devout Moslem. "He therefore exterminated his 'adorers' without pity." Scrupulousness and pity were indeed qualities seldom seen in this mighty Abbasside. There are few stories of royal ingratitude and treachery less edifying than the tale how Mansur, having conceived a green jealousy of Abu Muslim, his great general, to whom he practically owed his throne, lured that magnate into his pavilion with fond professions of friendship, then had him hewn to pieces in his very presence. "How many," asked Mansur, regarding the mutilated corpse of his great officer, "did this father of shame slay in our service?" "Six hundred thousand," with gross exaggeration they told him. The Kalif laughed gleefully and became an extemporary poet:

> "Thy long-owed debt is paid to me and mine:
> Now hast thou drained the cup of gall and brine
> That thou didst brew for others—Son of Crime!"

Mansur also betrayed grossly the hopes of the House of Ali that the overthrow of the Omiads would bring them to a share in the government. The wretched descendants of the Prophet again were goaded into a hopeless rebellion; and most of them were then exterminated in battle or by the executioner.

Yet with all this cruelty Mansur was a clever administrator and held his empire well together. His son. El Mahdi (775-785 A.D.), was a man of better character, who devoted himself not without success to the works of humanity and civilization. Leper hospitals and wells, and hospices along the pilgrim road to Mecca were, perhaps, fairer monuments to his reign than the stately mosques which he built or the successes he won against the Byzantines. His next important successor was Harun al Raschid (786-809),

who is by all odds the most famous of the Kalifs, and in his reign the Saracenic dominion is ordinarily held to have reached its apogée.

Reign of Harun al Raschid (786-809 A. D.). Apogée of the Kalifate

Beyond a doubt, at this epoch the Moslem Orient enjoyed more stable conditions of law and order, distant commerce could proceed with more safety, the government displayed a more benevolent activity, and the rulers themselves seemed taking a more active interest in promoting the arts of peace, than in almost any other period since the Hegira. The "mosques, colleges and schools, the hospitals, dispensaries, caravanserais, roads, bridges and canals, with which Harun covered the countries under his sway," are by no means all a myth. Nevertheless, when the despot himself is examined he appears of very doubtful stuff. The great success of his reign and the general prosperity of his subjects he seems to have owed to his remarkable Persian vizier, Jaafar of the noble House of Barmek, and to this minister's three brothers, equally gifted and all clothed with high offices. For seventeen years the monarch was served by these four brethren "with unswerving fidelity and extraordinary ability." Then the inevitable distrust of the autocrat was awakened. The enemies of the Barmeks distilled their poisonous suggestions. In 803 Jaafar was suddenly seized and beheaded by order of a master who a few hours before had been loading him with blandishments and presents of honor. The fallen vizier's kinsmen all perished or were ruined with him, and Harun thus ended his reign sanguinarily and gloomily, distressed by the barely concealed enmity betwixt his sons, Amin and Mamun, and the friction and conspiracies in his harem.

Harun al Raschid may never actually have wandered about Bagdad in disguise to discover his subjects' doings, as legends represented him, but he was surely a most conspicuous figure in his own age. Probably he had a genuine taste for the poetry and music he affected to patronize at his court, and could take an intelligent interest in the really scientific jurists of the "Hanafi" school of law, who were attempting to adjust the old customary law of the Eastern nations to the precepts of the Koran, and to develop the

whole as best they could into a complete legal system suitable for a complicated state of society. To Harun's court came envoys from Charlemagne on the west and from the "Faghfur" (Emperor of China) on the east; and of course the account is well-known of the gifts which he sent to his "brother"—the mighty Frankish Emperor at Aachen,[4] especially of that clock "which struck the hours by balls falling upon a plate of brass"—one of the many tokens of how much the young world of the West had to learn from the aged but still vitalized world of the Near East.

Harun died while on an expedition to Khorassan. As he lay near his end he caused a certain Bechir, guilty of sharing in a revolt, to be dragged to his bedside. "Then he caused a butcher to come, who received orders to cut from Becher all his members, first cutting off all his fingers and toes, and finally, in the presence of the Kalif, dividing him into four pieces." But after this characteristic act Harun died almost as unhappy as his victim, realizing that by no possible precaution could he avert warfare betwixt his sons the moment breath left his own body.

Gradual Decline of the Kalifate. The Turkish Guard

Amin (809-813 A. D.), the son of Harun's favorite wife, Zubaida, was able to seize Bagdad and to hold the same, while his half-brother Mamun, the son of a Persian favorite, armed in Khorassan against him. Amin was a luxury-loving sensualist. Reposing in his palace, he presently sent an army under one Ali bin Isa against his brother. Takir, the general of Mamun, however, won a complete victory, and thus pithily announced his success, "The head of Ali bin Isa is before me: his ring is on my finger: his men are under me!"[5] In 813 Bagdad was besieged and the city was grievously damaged, until Amin surrendered and was murdered by brutal Persian soldiers, possibly without his brother's direct connivance.

Mamun (813-833) was probably the most successful of the Abbassides following Harun. His reign is a story of revolts pitilessly crushed, of wars with the Byzantines not inglorious, of splendid

[4] Harun, of course, cultivated the friendship of Charlemagne as likely to prove a convenient offset to the Byzantine Basileus. For similar reasons the Byzantine rulers and the Omiad princes of Spain sometimes exchanged vows of friendship.

[5] Takir was rewarded for his victory by being allowed to found what amounted to a semi-independent hereditary principality in Khorassan. The Takirites continued to rule until overthrown by the still less obedient Soffarides (see p. 156). No Kalif could by this time command the zealous support of his emirs without ruinous concessions.

fêtes at the capital, and of ostentatious patronage of poets and litterateurs. There was much magnificence, but there was very little progress. The Saracenic world had reached that stage of conservative prosperity, which in many an Oriental monarchy is the forerunner of decline. His brother Motasim (833-841 A. D.) continued to enjoy apparently prosperous and powerful days, but with the following Kalifs there was such an obvious weakening of the entire government that it is needless to catalogue individual monarchs.

The immediate cause of the decline of the Kalifate was one known in many another great empire, including Cæsarian Rome. Irresistible is the temptation of autocrats to surround themselves by a guard of mercenaries dependent upon themselves, and not likely to sympathize with the populace of the capital should the latter dare to revolt against its master. Under the early Abbassides, Persians had been used in the guard-corps as a just offset to Arab or Syrian malcontents. But Persians were now proving to be open to disloyal influences. Motasim substituted for them a guard of Turks—hardy Turanians from beyond the Oxus, saffron-skinned barbarians who knew little Persian and less Arabic, who were barely converted to Islam even, who despised the elegant luxuries of the citizens of Bagdad, but whose scimitars were keen and who at first were implicitly devoted to their imperial paymaster.[6]

The Kalifs in the Power of the Turkish Guard and of the Emir of Emirs

Motasim's blunder was bitterly regretted in a few decades by his successors. The Turkish guard quickly learned its power. Capital and sovran were at its mercy. Its commander soon outweighed the Grand Vizier and could not be dismissed without the consent of his own men. The real truth of the situation was proclaimed in 861, when the captains of these terrible prætorians, having made a bargain with the crown-prince, Montaser, slew in his presence his father, the Kalif Motawakkel. Montaser died in five months, poisoned, by common report, by the very men who had clothed him with tinsel power. Henceforth, although there were occasionally Kalifs with

[6] Other Moslem dynasties organized similar corps. The Fatimites while they held Egypt had a guard of Berbers, Negroes and Turks; the Spanish Omiads one of Berbers, Slavs and Christian Spaniards, "But always they were deceived. The instrument of power escaped them or turned against them." [Wahl.]

a spark of courage or energy, who struggled against being mere puppets of the guard-corps, they seldom accomplished anything save their own destruction.

To be "Commander of the Faithful" speedily came to mean to enjoy a short reign of gilded bondage, and presently to die in some barracks mutiny. The Court at Bagdad or at Samarra, a favorite residence town sixty miles northwest of the regular capital, was still one of glittering pretensions. The Kalif could receive foreign ambassadors "sitting on a couch of ebony inlaid with gold and silver, to the right whereof hung nine necklaces set with jewels that outshone the light of day," but it was all a mockery of power. The emirs now were each setting up their territorial dynasties, honoring the Kalif with "official prayers" in the mosques, but otherwise defying him completely. After 873 Persia had passed almost completely under the sway of the Soffarides (lit. "Kettle-Makers"), a dynasty founded by a certain adventurous Yakub who had begun life as a mender of old copper. This dynasty did not last long, but its various supplanters, usually led by chiefs of Turkish origin, did nothing to restore the lost emirates to the control of Bagdad. In 940 A. D. died Radi, the last Abbasside who maintained some pretense of imperial power.[7] By this time the true ruler of what was left of the secular Kalifate was the Emir of Emirs (*Emir-al-Omra*), a kind of Mayor of the Palace, who affected to be able to control the guards. This guardianship became practically an hereditary dignity in the Dilemite family, and the Kalifs lost about all political importance. As a kind of sacred Mikados they inhabited their vast palaces beside the Tigris in solitary state. The Emir of Emirs ruled their realm for them, but this "Irak" was a very small realm—not much more than ancient Babylonia. The huge remainder of their nominal dominions had fallen away to territorial Emirs who did that which was right in their own eyes.

The Fatimite Dynasty in Africa and Egypt (908-1171 A. D.)

The study of these Mohammedan dynasties—Saracenic, Moorish and Turkish—seems highly unprofitable save for the specialist.

[7] His predecessor and uncle, Kaher, had been deposed and blinded by the guard in 934. Authentic record has it that later he had to beg before a mosque, crying, "Good sirs, give me alms. Once I was your Kalif and now I am your beggar!"

The Islamic lands had now lost all political unity. The Emirates and Sultanates [8] were frequently divided up into petty territorial states, thanks to struggles within the viceregal dynasties. There was incessant warfare, but seldom any changes significant for later history. The one dynasty that rose considerably out of this wreck was that of the Fatimites of North Africa. In 908 this movement, headed by fanatics who claimed the peculiar championship of the rights of the Alids, seized Kairowan, the chief city in the Moorish provinces. In 967 they captured Cairo and the great Egyptian province itself.

The Fatimites refused to treat the Bagdad kalif as their spiritual chief, and they boasted themselves to be true Kalifs and descendants of Ali, although one of their shrewd monarchs is alleged to have clapped his hand on his scimitar crying, "Here is the founder of my line!" As a dynasty they assuredly enjoyed a great success for over two centuries. Their "Empire" in Egypt and the adjacent lands was for long the most powerful and prosperous dominion in all Islam. Cairo rivaled Bagdad as a magnificent capital. Only in the days of the Crusades did they collapse before the all-powerful Saladin (1171).

Bagdad Destroyed by the Mongols (1258 A. D.)

Their rival, the Abbasside, continued meantime in his gilded prison within his shrunken dominions along the Tigris until 1258, when Hulagu, grandson of Jenghiz-Khan the Mongol, took Bagdad with a slaughter (so at least the shuddering annalist reports) of 1,600,000 souls. He merely destroyed the pretense of an Empire whereof the reality had long since slipped away.[9] The earlier Saracenic Empires had marked the last great political revival of the old Semitic race. Under the Abbassides the strong Persian element in the court and society had, however, represented the returning strength of Indo-Europeanism. Now there was to be

[8] The title Sultan ("Ruler" in Arabic) now comes into increasingly familiar use. It was first applied to the Emir of Emirs at Bagdad about 950 A. D. but was soon caught up by other pretentious potentates.

[9] The real calamity attendant upon the Mongol invasion of 1258 was not so much the sack of Bagdad as the *ruin of the great irrigation system* which had made Babylonia a wealthy garden since 4000 B. C. Owing to Mongol massacre and devastation the elaborate system of locks, canals, etc., perished. The country soon reverted to miasmic swamps and jungles and the desert encroached steadily upon the reclaimed land on the fringes. This disaster has never been repaired.

No doubt this once superb irrigation system had already been falling into decay under the feeble rule of the later Abbassides.

another expansion of Islam, but it was to be the achievement of still other peoples, newly converted,—the Turanian Turks.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON THE MOORISH POWER IN SPAIN

The Moslem dominion in Spain hardly figures as part of the history of the Near East, yet it cannot quite be ignored.

In 758 Abd-ur-Rahman, the Omiad fugitive, induced the Spanish Moslems —a few Arabs, many Moors, and many Christian renegadoes—to reject the viceroys sent out by the Abbassides and recognize him as their independent "emir." For the next two hundred years the "Emirate of Cordova" in the main prospered and maintained itself. The Omiad realm at first embraced about three quarters of the peninsula, and despite frequent civil wars and contests with the Christians of the northern mountains, it could perhaps claim to be the best governed and most civilized country in Western Europe, during all that distressing period which followed the break-up of Charlemagne's Empire. The great ruler Abd-ur-Rahman III (912-961) at length found himself in such a position of confident prosperity that he threw down the gauntlet to the decadent Abbassides by assuming the title of "Kalif." After about 1000, however, especially following the passing of the redoubtable vizier Mansur (died 1002), the prosperity of this late born and "Occidental" Kalifate ran down rapidly. The Omiad dynasty at Cordova disappeared amid civil wars: the emir of each important city or province exalted himself as "King," and with the collapse of Moslem unity the Christian attacks from such growing states as Castile, Leon and Aragon became ever more formidable, while the contentions among the Moors usually paralyzed effective resistance.

In 1084 Alphonso of Castile and Leon took Toledo, the bulwark of the Moslems in the center of the peninsula. Twice did Spanish Islam gain a respite by the invitation into Europe of bands of Moorish fanatics from Morocco,—the Almoravades late in the eleventh century, and the Almohades in the twelfth,—but these could not arrest permanently the advance of the Christians. In 1212 the power of the Almohades was broken by the Castillians at the famous battle of the Navas de Tolosa. In 1236 Cordova itself fell to the Christians, and in 1248 Seville. The only surviving Islamic dominion left in Spain was the oft-celebrated kingdom of Granada. Here in a realm barely two hundred miles long and seventy wide, but fertile and full of a highly civilized population, the "Spanish Moors" stood at bay. By acknowledging themselves vassals of Castile, and taking advantage of the incessant feudal wars and dynastic struggles which rent Christian Spain, these builders and lords of the Alhambra (the "Red" palace-fortress above Granada) maintained their separate existence until 1492, when the superior might of Ferdinand and Isabella ended the distracted rule of the unfortunate Boabdil.

In the days of its glory Cordova was undoubtedly a western Bagdad—with much the same type of semi-barbaric magnificence. Its schools and university were of course far more accessible to scholars of the Latin West than were

those of its Eastern rival. Granada later, although with a very small hinterland, seems also to have maintained to the end the worthiest Islamic traditions.[10]

[10] It is not needful, however, to represent the Christian conquerors of Cordova and Granada as so grossly inferior in civilization to the conquered Spanish Moors, as is done by many modern writers. In Spain Mohammedanism and Orientalism were mere exotics, without historic roots or cultural traditions, and bound to perish as soon as the power of the West could be brought to bear against them.

CHAPTER XIV

SARACENIC CULTURE

Nature of the Saracenic Civilization

Much has been written, sometimes with overenthusiasm, concerning the civilization of the Saracens. In one sense Omiad Damascus, Abbasside Bagdad and Fatimite Cairo merely continued, with new names and a new religion, the average degree of culture one might have found at the capitals of Amenhotep III, Assurbanipal or Darius I. Nevertheless there was added the effect upon the Oriental genius of *certain elements* in the Western Greek civilization which inevitably forced themselves upon the new Islamic rulers of the Near East. The intellectual and political leaders of Bagdad could not appreciate nor even understand democratic orators like Demosthenes, tragedians like Euripides, the more spiritual and imaginative dialogues of Plato, and much less could they comprehend the majestic surges of the Iliad and Odyssey. But they welcomed (usually through the medium of Syrian translations) the colder metaphysical writings of Plato and Aristotle, Euclid's Geometry, Ptolemy's Geography, Hippocrates' treatises on medicine and similar factual or philosophic writings which required neither democratic sympathies nor a trained literary appreciation.

It seems an immutable law that an Oriental civilization shall progress brilliantly up to a certain point and then, often without any great outward political catastrophe, run upon a filmy but very formidable barrier beyond which further intellectual or artistic development appears impossible. Long before the end of the Middle Ages the Saracenic mind had exhausted the results of the impetus given to it by this indirect contact with Greek philosophy and science. In recent years the tendency has been somewhat to exaggerate the importance and extent of the contributions of Saracen savants and craftsmen to the culture of Western Europe. Probably the credit for many cultural matters often declared to

be traceable to Islamic Bagdad ought rather to be assigned to Christian Constantinople. Nevertheless if civilization is to be defined as "the conquest of nature by art for the advantage of mankind," the sum total of Saracenic contributions to the world's progress is varied and significant.

Saracenic Administration and Government

In governmental matters the Omiads and Abbassides gave indeed to the world little or nothing that was new. Despotism, at least until extremely recently, has been the only form of government that has functioned acceptably on a large scale in the Orient. From the accession of Moawia (661) the Saracenic Empire was a "despotism tempered by assassination," not much different in its autocratic tendencies than that of Sargon, Artaxerxes, or Chosroës II. The Kalif was indeed able to command additional reverence on account of his "spiritual" authority as successor of the Prophet, but most certainly it was out of very temporal and bodily fear that millions paid him taxes and cringed at his behests. The government of the kalifs was extremely simple; indeed the lack of suitable administrative machinery contributed largely to the Abbasside decline.

Virtually the old familiar type of administration in the two Persian Empires was maintained still another time. At Bagdad there was a Grand Vizier with subordinate viziers, various departments (divans) of state and audit, a chancery office, with the greater officials meeting in an Imperial Council for the handling of high state policies. Also inevitably there existed a great harem with intriguing inmates, an "Empress" (favorite consort), inferior wives, concubines, and chief eunuch,—with the unavoidable intrigues and plots usually in behalf or against some of the Kalif's overnumerous children.

The weakest point in an Oriental monarchy has always been the control of the provincial governors. The Abbasside Kalifate presented no exception. Only the most energetic monarchs were able to prevent the distant emirs from speedily hardening into their offices on dangerously long tenures and sending to Bagdad only a minor share of their revenues. To check the viceroys the Kalifs constantly used confidential messengers to visit each district and

report constantly to the capital—a device similar to the Old Persian "Eyes of the King" and to the Carolingian "Missi Diminici." The taxation seems to have been moderate so long as the Kalifs could control the rapacity of their officials. Many Jews and Christians, thanks to their practical abilities, held high posts in the civil administration. The army was partly composed of hired mercenaries, partly of levies drawn from the "military fiefs"—lands assigned on the pledge of their holders to supply competent troops for the army, a system time-honored in many lands. In short the Kalifate in its palmy days was little better, and in its decadent days was little worse than similar types of ancient Oriental monarchies.

Development of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce

In peaceful culture, although the Saracens drew heaviest upon the Greeks and the earlier Semitic civilizations, their contact with the Far East seems also to have permitted Hindoo and possibly even Chinese contributions. It is a matter of extreme difficulty to say how far the Saracen scientists and physicists invented sundry matters; how far they merely borrowed from sources that now have disappeared. Their civilization has well been called "a mixture derived from models of the Greek, Persians, Syrian, Egyptian, Spanish and Hindoo, yet . . . the imitation although conscious is not servile." At Damascus, at Bagdad, Cordova, Cairo, and also at Kairowan in North Africa, Fez in Morocco, Palermo in Sicily, and in such remote Eastern cities as Samarcand there were "universities, schools, libraries and observatories," which for long were superior to anything in contemporary Christendom, barring always Constantinople. Many Kalifs and emirs supplied ample endowments and founded professorships out of worthier motives than self-exaltation. The office of the teacher received high public honor, and the masters of learning often deserved their rewards.

The following is, perhaps, a fair summary of what the Saracenic genius accomplished before it ran its course.

I. In the practical field of *Agriculture* the Moslems walked in the footsteps of the older Semites, the Phœnicians and Carthaginians. As by them, real progress was made in horticulture, the acclimatization of strange plants and scientific irrigation. It is thanks to the "Arab" that Europe seems to have obtained many new flowers such

as the jasmine, the camelia and probably the double rose. Rice was introduced into the West from India via Egypt, Sicily and Spain; sugar-cane also came from the East into Andalusia and Asia Minor; the mulberry was naturalized in Spain and Sicily; [1] and it is alleged to have been by contact with the Saracens that Europeans came to use or to grow saffron, hemp, the orange, the apricot, the lemon, the asparagus, the artichoke, and the kidney-bean.

II. The Arab revived many ancient *industries* and *handicrafts* and added certain new ones. The weapons and armor of Damascus and Toledo were of course renowned down to the end of the Middle Ages; likewise the products of the Moslem jeweler, the enameler and the engraver. The glass of Bagdad, Egypt and Syria was widely exported, as well as many exquisite fabrics of silk, cotton and linen. In such matters, however, Byzantine competition was inevitably very serious. More unique probably were the productions of excellent dye-stuffs and the manufacture of drugs, perfumes, and essences,—commodities in demand all over the civilized world.

To the Saracenic Empire posterity owes also a certain revolutionary invention. *Paper* (at first made solely of silk rags) seems to have been originally manufactured at Samarcand, close to the confines of China. Presently Bagdad imitated Samarcand, and as the Middle Ages waned Europe learned from Bagdad. This innovation had incalculable meaning for the world. How later would have availed the invention of printing if the types could only be pressed upon rare and costly parchment?

III. The *commerce* of the Saracens of course covered the entire dominions of the Kalifs and penetrated foreign lands. Under the abler Omiads and Abbassides, robbers and pirates were held under reasonable control, and the authorities kept the roads in decent condition and refrained from too many crippling exactions. There were caravan routes from Kairowan across the Sahara and deep into tropical Africa. Arab dhows went along the Red Sea far down the eastern coast of the Dark Continent. Other merchantmen, sailing from Basra at the mouth of the Twin Rivers or from Bagdad itself, sought spices, aromatic woods, pearls and rare stuffs at Calicut

[1] It may have come from the Greek lands, however, and not from the Moslem Levant.

in India or even in such Malay lands as Sumatra. Chinese merchants, coming by the caravan routes, or direct by sea, brought to the Kalif's cities their raw and spun silks, porcelain, lacquer wares and tea.[2] Down the Caspian and through the Caucasus mountain passes the barbarous peoples of the North shipped furs, wax, amber and the more precious "white slaves." Hoards of coins of the Kalifate have been found on the coasts of the Baltic even to the frontiers of Poland.

Intellectual Life, Chemistry, Algebra, "Arabic" Numerals, Saracenic Art.

IV. In the "medrasses" or universities where youths of intellectual tasks were taught alike to be lawyers and theologians, there often obtained conditions which genuinely promoted a worthy learning. A relatively high standard prevailed in the instruction in grammar, rhetoric, history, mathematics and astronomy. Very large libraries were collected; that of Cairo boasted 120,000 volumes; that at Cordova 400,000.[3] Innumerable copyists to a certain extent replaced the printing press. Although the more orthodox Islamic clergy discouraged curious meddling in non-religious subjects, there did not lack rationalizing skeptics (duly persecuted when they went too far!), and other saner yet bold spirits who boldly investigated "error," avowedly as a means of fortifying truth. Theology and law, since both rested upon the Koran, became practically confounded, but there were also certain detached "philosophers" (such as the later Averroës—1126-1198 A. D.) who worked out systems of the Cosmos that were avowedly derived from Aristotle and not from the Suras. A good many histories of real insight and acumen were written, dealing especially of course with events since the Hegira. Such an historical work as Maçoudis' (died 956) "Fields of Gold" is far superior both in literary form and critical handling to the great run of Christian mediæval chronicles.

V. Finally in *Science* the Saracens seem to have made a progress which renders the world forever their debtors. In quest, perhaps,

[2] Probably the direct sea commerce with China was not great. Most Chinese products seem to have come by caravan, either via Kashmir and Kaboul, or via Mongolia and Samarcand.

[3] Of course these were mostly very small manuscripts, not ponderous tomes in fine print.

of the "philosopher's stone" and the vain projects of alchemy, as well as in more legitimate attempts to distill new medicines, the Moslem savants laid the real foundations of *chemistry*,—learning to make alcohol, sulphuric acid, nitrate of silver, corrosive sublimate and the like. In *astronomy* and *geography* they caught up the system of Ptolemy, and by developing if not inventing such apparatus as the astrolobe, the sextant, and the quadrant worked out many astronomical and mathematical formulæ; and went far to correct many of the errors of computation made by the Græco-Romans.[4] But while they thus made full use of the geometric discoveries of the Ancients, their own contributions were startling. In the *"Treatise of Algebra"* by Mohammed ibn-Musa, surnamed Alkharismi, composed about 820, a new science seems to have been practically invented. Ibn Musa solved algebraic equations of the *second* degree. His successors were to solve them of the *fourth*. The next step in the tenth century was to apply algebra to expand the science of *trigonometry*. It was thanks to such forgotten worthies as Battany, Hassan-ben-Haïthem and Alhazen that trigonometry and optics became upstanding sciences and not feeble annexes merely of Euclidian geometry.

Competent history fails to recall the Moslem who made the greatest mathematical contribution of all—the introduction of *Arabic numerals* into the common usages of arithmetic. The man who emancipated his fellows from the old Græco-Roman system of "literal" numeration was more truly a world benefactor than very many for whom the grateful nations have piled up the memorials in marble.[5]

VI. Concerning Saracenic art only a word can be spoken. The Koran forbade the representation of the human figure. This law was not always observed, especially in Persia, but no Kalif dared to patronize generously the sculptor or the painter. Saracenic art

[4] Thus Ptolemy computed the length of the Mediterranean at 62 degrees. The Saracenic mathematicians reduced this to 54, and then to 42,—which is pretty close to the correct figure.

[5] Eastern tradition makes our so-called "Arabic" numerals to possess a Hindoo origin. The Saracens themselves spoke of "Indian" figures. As a matter of fact, characters not unlike our own, from 1 to 9 inclusive, appear in Europe as early as the time of Bœthius, who died in Italy 525 A. D. The figures 1, 7, 8 and 9 are almost exactly those of a later day; the "2" is our own, but inverted as "Z," and the "6" greatly resembles the present. But the Saracens appear to have made use of the new system far more generally, and, above all, they seem to have *invented the Zero* (Arabic "sifir" = "cipher") which was, of course, the one thing that made it possible to give to the other signs a "value of position" and to utilize them in a scientific decimal system.

Mohammed Ibn Musa, named above as one of the fathers of algebra, *may* possibly have been the first to employ this revolutionary innovation.

with its stalactites, its horseshoe arches, its geometric scrolls, its verses of the Koran in florated script, and its huge domes and pinnacles is often elegant and impressive; but the indebtedness to Byzantium and sometimes also to India is very obvious. Here as in so many other things the Kalifs were clever borrowers and adapters. This fact, however, did not deprive of beauty and magnificence the palaces, kiosks, cupolas and mosques [6] which covered Bagdad and her rival capitals in the days of their glory.

It is thus clear that the Saracens developed a genuine civilization and made very essential contributions to the elements of modern science. The creativeness of their sages had practically halted, however, by the year 1000 A. D. The lamp of cultural progress was passing to the Christian West. The political power of the sword was passing in the East to those Turks who had first appeared at Bagdad as the uncouth mercenaries of the Kalif's guard.

[6] The superior mosques often had schools, hospices, etc., attached to them, and were huge buildings by no means used solely for prayer and religious exhortation. The Mosque of Hassan (1358 A. D.) at Cairo was nearly 450 feet long by 235 feet broad. Its main cupola rose to the height of 165 feet. Its tallest minaret for the muezzin was 270 feet high. The minarets were perhaps the most truly original of all the new features of Islamic architecture.

CHAPTER XV

THE TURANIAN TURKS IN NEARER ASIA. THE CRUSADES AND THE MONGOLS

Origin of the "Turks": Barbarian Nomads

Nearer Asia down to about 1000 A. D. had been dominated by two races—the Indo-Europeans and Semites. Now came on the scene a third great segment of the human family, the Turanians, as represented especially by the Turks. This change was not good for mankind.

The Turanians have contributed less to civilization than any other great human family save the negroes. Chinese and Japanese may once have been part of their ethnic grouping, but long since these have drifted away. No Tartar, Mongol, or Turk, apparently, has ever been a superior philosopher, poet, artist, scientist, or religious leader. Turan has merely produced great warriors, and those of the most pernicious type—captains who know only how to conquer, but who can build nothing good or lasting upon their bloody conquests.

Between the Caspian Sea and the teeming river valleys of China, and north of the Oxus and the towering ranges of the Hindu-Kush, there lies that vast dim land which plays so little part in most of our conventional history. Many sections of this later day "Turkestan" and "Siberia" are fertile, and probably in antiquity they were better watered and therefore even more fertile than at present. Nevertheless large tracts of this enormous territory seem destined by fate to be the chosen home of the nomad: not an impossible desert, but too dry for easy agriculture; not of arctic cold, but with climate too severe for southern ease. From time immemorial we seem to find this region inhabited by tribes and then by larger tribes, "nations," that were perennially fluid. Either they actually lived in portable tents, or on small provocation they quitted their crude

houses and followed their flocks and herds elsewhere. Sang one of the Turanian bards, echoing this nomad spirit:

> "Profitless 'tis in this world to build the strong castle or palace,
> Ruins they are in the end: and profitless 'tis to build cities."

The general conditions have been somewhat as in Arabia, but among men who have not the Semites' native idealism and spirituality, and without that very important contact with such culture-lands as Syria and Babylonia which pre-Mohammedan Arabia enjoyed.

The more civilized folk with whom original dwellers in Inner Asia had most contact were the Chinese. But Inner Asia is vast. The Turanians who covered the great land-locked continent were split into many sub-races and peoples. It is fair to call those branches nearest to China the *"Mongols,"* who have always been pagans, and who in time took on certain civilized traits from the Chinese. The *"Turks"* lay rather farther to the westward, nearer to the Aral and the Oxus. They were destined at last to become Mohammedans. Prior to accepting Islam, the only important contacts they seem to have had with civilization were through occasional wars with Sassanid Persia. The latter monarchy was a very poor schoolmaster in cultural matters.

The Turks were therefore fairly unspoiled barbarians, in the nomad stage, or only a little higher, when the Arabs conquered Persia in the seventh century.[1] It is possible to make a long list of the Turanian peoples, especially as they are recorded by Chinese writers, ere they thrust themselves into Western history; but the names are unimportant. "There was no great difference in the manners and customs of these tribes. As they settled down from time to time they borrowed a good deal from their civilized neighbors, but their natural manner of life was simple and untrammeled. Of them the Turkish-speaking tribes were the most mobile and adventurous. Starting from the confines of China they reached India, Algeria, and the walls of Vienna." [Eliot.] War was their delight, and however primitive their science and ethics in other respects, their "khans" early learned how to mobilize great armies,

[1] For the sake of clarity one may call the *Tartars* those Turanians who ultimately found their way north of the Aral and Caspian into Russia; while the *Mongols* remained mostly near China, and the *Turks* entered Southwestern Asia. This classification is wholly unscientific but it is decidedly convenient.

to enforce strict discipline and to reduce strongly fortified cities. "It is the glory of these people," wrote a terrified Chinese annalist, "to die in battle. To die of illness with them is accounted shameful."

The Turks are Converted to Islam. The Seljuks in Persia (1040 A. D.)

Before the coming of Islam the East Roman Emperors had found that one of their best weapons against the Sassanids was to incite the Turks located to the northeast of Persia, to raid the Great King's dominions. After Persia had been conquered by the Saracens some of their more enterprising emirs undertook indeed to invade the Tranxoxian region, spreading the new gospel of the sword. They had a certain success, but did not penetrate very far. Some of Turanian Inner Asia was to remain Pagan, and most superstitiously and primitively pagan unto this day.[2] The tribes nearest the Kalifate gradually were absorbed by Islam, but more because of their interest in entering the Saracenic armies and by commercial and cultural inducements than because of coercion. Probably not before 1000 A. D. did the bulk of this Turkish portion of the great Turanian family accept the creed of the Prophet. When it did so, however, *Mohammedanism entered upon a new lease of life.* The dynamic power of Arabian Islam had spent itself. Syria, Egypt, and Persia had lost all zeal for the djihad, but the Turks, as has been suggested, were of a race with but a single high quality—that of the soldier. The mandate to extend by war the confines of their faith confirmed their most inveterate propensity. Semitic warriors had won for Mohammedanism nearly all of Nearer Asia. Turanian warriors were to carry their crescent far into affrighted Europe.

Concerning many of the dynasties of Turkish or partially Turkish origin, which invaders or adventurers erected on the ruins of Abbasside Kalifate, it is profitless to write. Their stories are inevitably monotonous and bloody—change without progress. But in the annals of the Levant, one nation and its folk-wandering stands out beyond all the rest—the *Seljuks.* Before 1000 A. D. there was in the lands of the remote river Jaxartes in Transoxiana a Turkish

[2] Not a few of the Mongols at present profess a form of "Buddhism," but their religion is seemingly a debased travesty of the teachings of the "Light of Asia" and of his worthier disciples.

people first met under the name of "Ghuzz." The Seljuks seem originally to have been the royal family of this race of semi-nomads. About the end of the first millenium the kalifate was of course breaking to pieces; the Turkish guardsmen were dominating the helpless Commander of the Faithful at Bagdad, and Persia was passing under the power of a fairly efficient dynasty, the Ghaznivids. The latter for some time held back the barbarous Ghuzz who, although converted to Islam, never ceased to raid their Mohammedan neighbors. In 1040, however, the Ghuzz forced their way over the barrier rivers and won a great victory near Merv. Soon all Persia was at the mercy of their Khan, the redoubtable Toghrul Beg, and henceforth we may speak of the "Seljuk" Empire.

Toghrul Beg and Alp Arslan Lead the Seljuks into the Levant (1040-1073 A. D.)

Toghrul's dominions were not long confined to Persia. At Bagdad the puppet Kalif, Kaim, was chafing under the tutelage of his "Buyid" lieutenant and keeper. The Buyid dynasts had added to their sins by adhering to the Shiah (ultra-Alid) heresy. Gladly the unhappy Kalif therefore sent to the Seljuk, who like most fresh converts was decidedly orthodox, inviting him to come to Bagdad as his authorized high protector. Toghrul came in delight. The last Buyid princes perished in battle or by the bowstring. The Kalif of course had merely passed from one tutelage to another, but Toghrul profited enormously. When he died (1063), he held dominions that extended from the Euphrates far eastward into Asia, and he left to his nephew Alp Arslan a victorious army and glorious prospects. The Turanian was already entering the Levant.

The scattered Saracenic emirates in Syria which had risen on the ruins of the kalifate were now of course an easy prey for the invaders out of the East. The Fatimite rulers of Egypt were indeed too strong for the Turkish hordes, but in the three decades following the death of Toghrul his followers mastered Palestine rather easily. Jerusalem itself passed temporarily into the power of a "family of Ortok," which acknowledged a loose allegiance to the Seljuk arch-sultan. It was the outrage proffered Christian pilgrims by these new lords of the Holy Land (almost as hated by the Moslem Arabs as by the Christian Syrians themselves) which

was a moving factor in precipitating the First Crusade. As a modern Mohammedan writer states the case, by this time the Seljuk had "adopted Islam with fervor and enthusiasm, and become its ardent champions. While the Arabs were devoting themselves to cultivating the arts of peace, *they* devoted themselves to the extension of the power of Islam." The result was to provoke the lightnings from the West.

Of course, however, the main Seljuk horde was irresistibly attracted towards the rich Byzantine lands of Asia Minor. The ruin of Christian Armenia, the decisive disaster of Manzikert, the wholesale devastation of the imperial themes up to the very Bosphorus have been already related (see p. 78). Alp Arslan ("The Valiant Lion"), Toghrul's successor, was invested by the trembling Kalif with the title of "High Sultan." Probably he was really a good type of a "noble savage." Obsequious chroniclers recorded that he was "noble, benevolent, just and wise; pure, pious and devout in his life; humane of heart, charitable and a friend of the poor; never indulging in anything reprehensible, and withal brave and chivalrous." [Ibn ul-Athîr.] All this was, of course, quite compatible with his leading myriads of pitiless horsemen across lands which they reduced practically to a desert. But Alp Arslan did not long survive his great victory at Manzikert (see p. 77). In 1073 his son Malik Shah assumed his throne which implied substantially the over-lordship of Nearer Asia from Afghanistan to Bithynia.

Break-up of the Seljuk "Empire"

Fortunately for the repose of neighboring lands, the Turanian hordes usually contained their own worst enemies. Malik Shah died in 1092 after a reign in which his newly created Seljuk Empire was already showing signs of dissolution. His elder son, Barkyaruk, and his younger, Mohammed, turned the bows of the Seljuk hosts on one another in "the bloody hotbed of intestive discord," while "the poisonous plant of murder and sedition flourished." Barkyaruk disappeared in 1104 after civil wars which reduced the realm of Malik Shah to a congeries of contending unwieldy dynasties. In Syria, Damascus, Aleppo, and other cities, each already had set up its pretentious "sultan" or "emir"; while another despot lorded it in Mosul. In Asia Minor the new Moslem prince of Nicæa could

summon no effective help from his co-religionists elsewhere to meet the Latin attack. The Egyptian had actually driven the Seljuks out of Jerusalem shortly before the Crusaders appeared at the gates of the sacred city in 1099.

Such conditions were of course one of the prime reasons why the First Crusade (1095-1099) met with such decided success. As the Moslem chronicle bitterly records, "the discord among the Sultans enabled the Franks to establish themselves in the countries of Islam."

The history of the Crusades is really not a very important chapter of the history of the Near East. It lay of course in the power of Feudal Europe to send large armies to Syria which could defeat the Moslem levies, and which could have won even more striking results than was the case had they been under superior leadership. But the setting up of a Latin kingdom in Syria, a cross-section of feudal France transported far across seas, was an anomaly sure to fail unless radical measures were taken to win for it the steady allegiance of great masses of Orientals. Barring this the Christian possessions in Palestine were bound to be merely isolated garrisons barely defending themselves against constant pressure, and certain to fall the instant a supply of reënforcements dwindled. The Frankish chiefs of course failed absolutely to secure the good will even of the Levantine Christians, and the Fourth Crusade with its aftermath was merely the most striking example of how there existed hardly more cordiality between "Schismatics" than between "Misbelievers."

The First Crusade (1095-1099). The Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem

It is likely that the importance of the appeal by Komnenos for Western assistance against the Turks has been greatly exaggerated (cf. p. 81). If Constantinople had never lifted a finger probably about this time adventure-loving feudalism would have developed a zeal for armed expeditions to Palestine as a congenial means of squaring off lives spent in more sinful violence. The reaction, social and economic, produced by contact with the East upon the West, is not for discussion here. As for the cultural effects of the Western invasions upon the Orient, they seem to have been practically nil, at least in all larger aspects, although thanks to the development

of commerce through Genoa and Venice, a good many crude Western commodities doubtless found their way into the bazaars of Bagdad and Cairo. The material civilization of the Levant in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, although stagnant, and even retrograding, thanks to the break-up of the Kalifate and to the Turkish devastations, was so infinitely ahead of that of Latin Europe that the Moslem lands could learn little or nothing from the "Christian barbarians" who came from the lands of the Franks.

Of course, to the Moslems of Syria, long and firmly esconced in that country, the sudden descent of the first Crusaders was a terrible and unexpected bolt from the blue. The sultans who were contending over the fragments of the original Seljuk monarchy might well have dropped their feuds and rallied to the defense of Islam had they really comprehended the danger, but tidings from Christian Europe to Moslem Asia passed slowly and were as slowly comprehended. In 1095 French feudalism first sounded its dread battle cry, "God Wills It!" In 1097 the main Crusading bands were at Constantinople and were being ferried by Alexios across to Asia (see p. 82). Elsewhere is told how promptly they handled the first Turkish armies which tried to measure strength with them. Kilidge-Arslan, the sultan of Seljuk Asia Minor, was beaten and temporarily disabled before any fellow Moslems could come to his aid. In 1097-1098 the Crusaders besieged Antioch, and the local emir clamored in vain for timely succor. The city fell before the relieving army appeared. Then the tardily mustered rescuers (an ill-compacted host led by Kerbogha, emir of Mosul) were routed in a great battle before Antioch. This disaster for the nonce broke the courage of the Seljuks. It was an Egyptian garrison that finally defended Jerusalem against the Crusaders, and were massacred by the raging Christians when the Holy City was stormed in 1099.

This disunion of the Moslem powers soon enabled the Crusaders to secure practically the entire coast of Syria. The Kingdom of Jerusalem on the south, the principality of Antioch on the north, were only the chief units in a whole string of baronies and principalities whereof Tripolis, Berytus, Acre, Tyre, etc., are examples. But very seldom were the Latins able to penetrate into the hinterland. They never secured, for example, Damascus. They indeed took Edessa, east of Antioch, but lost it in 1144. They were always liable to a simultaneous attack if the Moslems could get together,

from Egypt on the southwest and from Damascus and Mesopotamia on the east. The permanent body of men-at-arms that remained in the Holy Land to defend the new conquests was very small. These were reënforced, it is true, by a pretty constant eastward drift of militant pilgrims (even when there was no regular "Crusade" in prospect) and by the more mercenary forces supplied intermittently by such Italian trading towns as Venice and Genoa, which were

finding profitable commercial openings in Syria. Nevertheless had the Moslem princes united, all would speedily have been over with the Christians.

Saladin and the Destruction of the Crusaders' Kingdom (1187)

Fortunately for the Latins, three quarters of a century passed before Syrian Islam found in "Saladin" (Salah ed-Deen) a leader of the first order. His genius in war was undeniable, but his success came largely because, partly by hard fighting, partly by skillful

diplomacy, this sultan united Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt under his sway, and thus was able to concentrate practically *all* the resources of the Moslem Levant against the Christians. When once union of the Islamic powers had taken place the position of the Kings of Jerusalem was desperate. The quality of their warriors—French feudal barons, Hospitalers, Templars, etc.—was of course excellent, but their numbers terribly limited. To the consolidated dominions of Saladin they could oppose not a determined population but only a single army, with few resources behind it. In 1187 the Latins finally staked all their chances on a single throw, and mobilized their maximum forces,[3] which they risked in a great pitched battle at Tiberias near the Sea of Galilee. Thanks to gross blunders in strategy and tactics the battle was lost, and the Christians' one available field army was practically annihilated. Saladin was therefore able speedily to take Jerusalem and nearly every other crusading fortress at any distance from blue water, not because he could breach the walls but because there were usually only women and old men left behind the ramparts and because the defenders could not hope for the least real succor except from distant Europe.

The recovery of Jerusalem by Saladin was the logical end to the Crusades. The city had been lost to the Moslems only because of their complete lack of unity. The Latins had never been anything but invaders and outlanders in Syria. Even if they captured Jerusalem again, they could not hope to retain the Holy City save as they were able to induce men of the West to emigrate wholesale to the Levant and build up in Palestine a Christian nation of Indo-Europeans. Of course no such feat was possible.

It was therefore not really a matter of great importance that in the famous and unlucky Third Crusade (1189-1192) Richard I of England and Philip Augustus of France failed to regain Jerusalem, although they might well have done so had those equally puissant monarchs developed a spirit of coöperation. They did, however, take the strong maritime city of Acre, and strengthen the hold of the Latin princes in many other seaboard towns and petty districts, so that Saladin was fain to make peace without driving the Occidentals out of a long, thin fringe on the coasts of Syria. Henceforth the "King of Jerusalem" reigned for long in Cyprus, now detached

[3] Apparently some 25,000 men, possibly a few more. Only about 1200 of these were mail-clad mounted knights, first-class feudal warriors.

from the Greek Empire; while the naval succors supplied by the Italian trading cities assisted the surviving Latin principalities to maintain a troubled existence for almost a century longer.[4]

The Mongols Under Jenghiz Khan (1162-1227 A.D.). Their Hideous Devastations

It was still of course the divisions of their foes that enabled these last Frankish fortress-towns to hold out. The thirteenth century was the era of the stupendous Mongol invasions which engulfed China and all central Asia, and spread their destroying wave to the very edges of the Levant. The Mongols were those pagan Turanians closest to China, who had been unconverted to Islam and untouched by Saracenic civilization even to the extent that were the Turks. Their wars with the Turks were to some extent family quarrels, which fact, however, did not prevent them from being to a degree destructive and devilish.

Probably to no other one mortal has it been given to be the direct mover of so much human misery as to that lord of the Mongolian steppes, Temuchin, better known as Jenghiz Khan (= "Perfect Warrior"), who existed in Asia from 1162 to 1227. His conquests of Northern China concern us not here, but when he quarreled with the Charismian Sultan of the Oxus region the blasts of unspeakable ruin were turned westward. The relatively flourishing civilization of Transoxiana perished in blood. Even to this day reverberates the horrid shock of the massacres such as occurred when Jenghiz took teeming centers like Bokhara. "The hay is cut; give your horses fodder!" called the terrible khan when he turned his Mongols loose on their spoil. Samarcand and Merv fared hardly better than Bokhara. Outraged tradition has it that his army slew 1,600,000 persons at Herat, when that once great city dared to rebel against him. The conqueror died at his seat near Lake Baikal in 1227 before he could actually invade the Near East, but he had created an incomparable war-machine and trained up extremely able successors and lieutenants. The Mongols continued a scourge to humanity for the next two generations.[5]

[4] In 1229 the great "Holy Roman Emperor" Frederick II actually recovered Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth under terms of a treaty with the Sultan El-Kamil of Egypt; but Frederick had to return to Europe and could do little for his new kingdom. In 1244 Jerusalem was taken by the Charismians (Turanian nomads akin to the Turks) and was lost to the Latins forever.

[5] With every allowance for the exaggeration of excited Orientals the amount of physical harm wrought by Jenghiz Khan and his followers remains terrific. The devas-

The Mongols in the Levant. Their Defeat by Kutuz the Egyptian (1260 A. D.)

The first effect of the Mongol conquest of Central Asia was to drive their victims, the Charismians (themselves no puny warriors), in roving hordes into Asia Minor and Syria. They were alike terrible to Christians and to Moslems. In 1244 the Latins of the Palestinian coasts and the Emir of Emesa (an uncouth alliance) tried to face an equally curious combination of Egyptians and Charismians at Gaza. The Latin-Moslem army was routed. Their foes between them overran Syria, but presently they quarreled. The Egyptians now made common cause with the Islamic Syrians and the Charismians were chased northward.

The real danger to the Levant, of being submerged in a deluge from Inner Asia, came a little later. Fortunately for the Syrians the successors of Jenghiz devoted their main energies for some time to the conquest of Russia and to invasions of Poland and Hungary,[6] as well as to a more complete subversion of China, but after 1250 came the crisis. This time it was not the victims of the Mongols but the Mongols themselves who pressed westward from conquered Persia. How Hulagu, brother of the High Khan, Mangu, took and treated Bagdad in 1258 has already been stated (see p. 157). The next step obviously was to invade Syria, and the Levant saw at last those terrible horsemen who seemed about to conquer the world; "stout and thickset, with high, broad shoulders and squat figures, swarthy and ugly, with short broad noses and pointed projected chins." Compared with Mohammedanized Turks, they were repulsive savages. It was much the same kind of a crisis as when German and Roman united to turn back Attila's Huns—the common enemy to all upstanding men.

"Fifty thousand persons" are said to have been slain in cold blood

tations in Turkestan were such that a contemporary native historian exclaims in horror: "In these lands he has invaded, not one in a thousand is left of the people"; and a Chinese historian declared: "Since the beginning of time no barbarous people have ever been so mighty as the Mongols are at present. They destroy empires as a man plucks out herbs by the roots." Another Chinese ingeniously computed that between 1211 and 1223 in China and adjacent lands Jenghiz and his hordes had killed *more than 18,500,000 human beings.* The proceedings of the Mongols in the Nearer East make these astonishing figures far from impossible.

[6] The attacks by the natives of Inner Asia upon Europe had reactions upon peoples whereof Great Khans had probably never heard even the names. About 1238 the inhabitants of Scandinavia (especially "Gothia") were too terrified by Mongol raids to send their ships for fish from the English coast. As a result (according to Matthew Paris) there was no export fish trade from England that year and forty to fifty herring sold in the island markets for a shilling.

when Aleppo fell to the Mongols. In Damascus the pagan conquerors destroyed churches and mosques with pitiless impartiality. They reckoned on taking Egypt as their next spoil, but the "Memluk" dynasts there were of hardy stuff. Hulagu, a really superior general, was obliged to return eastward to crush a revolt. His lieutenants who continued the campaign were less competent. In 1260 A. D. at Ain Jalut, near to old Nazareth, the Egyptian Sultan Kutuz met the Mongols in decisive battle. For once the Turanian hordes were vanquished. They were soon swept out of Syria, before they could work irreparable mischief in the Levant. From this time onward the inevitable dissensions among the Mongol Khans were their enemies' best allies. The Far East and Central Asia were to be afflicted by the hordes for long, but after a little they ceased to be a menace to Western Asia. Like the ancient Scythians of Old Testament days, these terrible folk whose "quiver was an open sepulcher," who "laid waste cities without inhabitant," practically disappeared until their temporary return a century and a half later under that heir of the spirit of Jenghiz—Timur the Tartar.

Last Christian Towns in Palestine Taken by the Egyptians. Fall of Acre (1291 A. D.)

Kutuz was foully assassinated very shortly after his great victory by his lieutenant, Bibars, who seized his throne. Bibars, although of execrable character, was however a prince of ability and energy. Next to Saladin he was the chief destroyer of the Latin power in Palestine. He dominated both Egypt and Syria and in 1268 took Antioch, virtually extinguishing the Christian foothold north of the Holy Land. The Crusading fervor in Europe had now well-nigh burned itself out. Only a powerful expedition could have saved the last Frankish fortress. Such a Crusade, it is true, was attempted again by St. Louis (Louis IX of France), but he was beguiled into trying to take Tunis in North Africa, and died while besieging that city far from Palestine (1270). No other important help could be sent to the isolated Latins. In 1287 Tripolis fell, and finally the center of Christian life in Palestine since the Third Crusade, Acre, was stormed in 1291 by the implacable "Memluk Sultans," the successors of Bibars.[7] The few remaining towns held by the Latins

[7] In Egypt the Fatimites, with their "Alid" heresy, had been overthrown by Saladin in 1171. The latter founded the line of *Ayyubite* sultans who lasted in the Nile valley

capitulated immediately. Henceforth Christian warriors were hardly to tread the soil of Palestine, save as prisoners or allies of the Infidel, until the British hosts moved forward in 1917-1918.

The Seljuk Kingdom of "Rum" (Asia Minor)

While thus Syria was returning to Moslem rule, although under Egyptian rather than Turkish auspices, the interior of Asia Minor remained as seen (p. 171) under the Seljuks. The sultan of the Turks in that peninsula [8] had been forced by the Crusaders to withdraw his capital from Nicæa to Konieh (Iconium). From 1100 well down to 1280 the Seljuk power in the interior of Asia Minor was by no means so stable, but that a resolute attack could have destroyed it altogether. We have seen how, nevertheless, the Greek Emperors failed ever to find the resources for such an attack, and therefore the "Sultans of Iconium" lived on for nigh two centuries, seldom strong enough to make themselves well obeyed by the emirs of the outlying districts, but gradually (by the mere continuance of their rule in the region) changing the hinterland of Asia Minor into a thoroughly Mohammedanized country. During this era there was a constant trickling of Turanian nomads into their dominions; mostly coming apparently in small bands from Central Asia, forced on by the great upheavals caused by the Mongols and their rivals. Some of these bands were probably pagan when they entered Asia Minor, though they were readily converted to Islam, but in any case the arrival of these nomads of course made the problem of preserving civilized life in the country more difficult than ever.

After civil wars and dynastic troubles profitless to follow, about 1300 the power of Kaikobad, the last Seljuk sultan at Konieh, evaporated rather than was overthrown. His one-time vassal emirs followed their own pleasures. Thus was presented the supreme opportunity for the most enterprising of all these chiefs—Osman I, founder of the greatness of the Ottomans.

until 1250, when the last ruler of that dynasty quarreled with his emirs and was made way with. His successors are often called the *Memluk* ("Slave") sultans, because the rulers were usually drawn from the enfranchised slaves (many from Circassia) who constituted the court and officered the army. This curious Memluk "aristocracy" at least furnished brave and fairly competent warriors. They and their sultans held Egypt and most of Syria until 1517 (see p. 218).

[8] It is worth noting that, as the successor in possession of the old Roman provinces, this potentate was often styled the "Sultan of *Rum*," and "Rum" and "Roumelia" continued to give the names to at least parts of the later Ottoman Empire. The Mongols never overran Asia Minor, although they so terrorized these Seljuk "Sultans of Rum" that for a while the latter acknowledged the Mongol High Khan as a kind of titular over-lord.

The Turanian invasions of the Near East had manifestly served to confound the civilization created alike by the Byzantines and the Saracens. The intruders from the Far East were, however, in all cases superior warriors, and kept all their fighting qualities in their new habitat. The story of the expansion of the Ottoman Turks therefore becomes the story of the intrusion of the spirit of Inner Asia into Europe itself.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RISE OF THE OTTOMAN POWER IN ASIA MINOR

The Origins of the Ottoman Turks. Ertoghrul in Asia Minor (about 1250 A. D.)

The recovery of Constantinople in 1261 from the Latins by the Greeks had been the "victory of one very weak state over another still weaker." The renewed Greek empire of the Palaiologoi was left exhausted and incapable of any great military effort. The break-up of the ill-compacted Seljuk "Sultanate of Rum" a generation later removed the other military power that might have checked new adventures in Asia Minor. About 1300, if a new dynasty and race of warriors could arise, the opportunity existed for them to seize the leadership of the Levant.[1] That dynasty and its warriors were not lacking.

It is a testimony to the barbarous origin of the Ottomans that concerning their beginnings there lack even plausible legends. Courtly historians and the Oriental imagination later indeed supplied the conquering Sultans with stories about their ancestors which one may honor somewhat as one honors the Homeric descriptions of the battles around Troy. To sift such legends from actual fact is a thankless task in a general history. The wisest course is to outline the beginning of Ottoman annals as it is ordinarily stated.

We are given to understand that around 1250 A. D. a sizable Turkish "horde," pushed on by Mongol attacks from the eastward, crossed the Euphrates, seeking new places for settlement. This horde—women, children, old men, slaves, with many cattle, and headed by about 4000 (some say only 2000) warriors—was led by one Solyman Shah. The Seljuk Sultan of Asia Minor, however, refused to receive the wanderers. They turned back towards Central

[1] The situation at that date in Asia Minor was one of absolute confusion. There were about fifty weak potentates scattered around the peninsula,—most of them Moslem "emirs," though some, like the "Emperor" of Trebizond, were Christian. They were all practically independent. Under such circumstances any well-directed, vigorous military power, suddenly arising, could go far.

Asia, but at the refording of the Euphrates, Solyman was swept from his horse and drowned in the river. The omen struck terror into the hearts of those of the band who were still on the Western bank. They refused to proceed Eastward and turned again into Asia Minor. The original horde then seems to have dispersed, but a remnant thereof, led by Solyman's son, Ertoghrul, wandered westward. It is told that at last he and his 400 warriors suddenly found themselves on a battlefield where two strange armies were locked in deadly encounter. For these Turanian riders to stand as neutral witnesses while the combat was decided was impossible. They loved battle for battle's own sake. Ertoghrul charged with his men, saying, "The manly part is to aid the vanquished!" and flew to the relief of the army which seemed weakest. Ertoghrul's charge decided the day. Alæddin, Sultan of Seljuk Asia Minor, had been rescued from a great host of Mongols.

Ertoghrul's Settlement Around Eski Sheir (Phrygia). Osman I Becomes Emir (1299-1326)

Alæddin was of course intensely grateful to this friend in sorest need. He bestowed on Ertoghrul and his people the district around Eski Sheir (ancient Dorylæum) in Northern Phrygia. Probably the grant of this fief cost the Seljuk little. He had given his new vassal a district close against Bithynia, still held by the Greeks, a debatable frontier march in which civilized life, even for Turks, seemed nigh impossible. The principality was now known as Sultan-Œni: "The Sultan's Front." Here Ertoghrul and his weary band at last could encamp, and gradually forsake some of their nomad habits. They had many affrays with the Greeks of Bithynia, and although traditions made these Turks often to be victorious, the principality grew very slowly. In 1288 Ertoghrul died, and Osman I, his son, ruled in his stead. Both leaders seem to have been faithful vassals of the Sultan at Iconium. Then, after 1300, when the Seljuk sultanate disappeared, came Osman's opportunity.

Legend does not give place to history even with the advent of Osman. We know that he created the fundamentals of a great military power; but we know little of his personality and not much more of the details of the achievements by which he started his descendants along the road to empire. It is clear that Ertoghrul

left to his son extremely scanty dominions, and that many of the other emirates which emerged from the wreck of Seljuk dominion were greater than his. Turkish historians later rejoiced in the story of how the young prince Osman wooed the daughter of the holy Sheik, Edebali, the beauteous Malkhatoon ("Treasure of a Woman") and how the father long refused him, on the ground apparently that Osman's principality was too insignificant. But the prince dreamed a dream, how out of his own body there sprang a mighty tree which grew "till it canopied the extreme horizon of the three parts of the world." Under it stood four majestic mountains—Caucasus, Atlas, Taurus, and Hæmus. From the roots of the tree gushed four great rivers—the Tigris, Euphrates, Danube, and Nile. All over the vast dominions under this tree sounded the muezzin's call to prayer, showing these lands would be Moslem, and finally a powerful wind made all the leaves of the tree point towards the majestic city of Constantinople, fitted "like a diamond set between two sapphires and two emeralds to form the most precious stone in a ring of universal empire."

Osman related this dream to the pious Edebali. The Sheik was so impressed that he gave the prince the hand of Malkhatoon. From them were to be descended that imperial house of Sultans which for better or worse ruled wide lands in the Levant even into the twentieth century.

State of the Greek Empire in 1300 A. D.

Osman's name is said to signify "bone-breaker," fit title for a ruler of resistless energy. Tradition, too, has praised his personal beauty, the strength of his arm, his skill as a horseman. He had, as stated, one of the smallest emirates in Asia Minor, but it had the advantage of being on the very fringe of the Moslem territories. The other emirs were usually engaged in desperate wars among themselves and therefore let him alone. Osman was close to the Christian lands, and the restored Greek rulers of Constantinople had neither the leisure nor the means for serious attacks against him.

The reigning emperor, Andronikos II (1282-1328), was one of the worst of the Palaiologoi. He had bitter feuds with his own relatives, other feuds with the Patriarchs of Constantinople, and constant wars or threats of wars at all times with the Serbs and Bulgars, and with the Venetians, Genoese, and other Latins. Prob-

ably for a long time the Greek leaders considered their restored capital in greater danger from a new attack by Catholic Christians than by the Infidels from across the Bosphorus. Even as late as 1306 Pope Clement V exhorted the Venetians to join in a new attempt to conquer the Greek schismatics. Under these circumstances such a chieftain as Osman could build up a formidable military power on the very flank of the Christian territories in Bithynia, and nothing important be done against him until it was too late.

The New "Ottoman" State. Osman's First Successes

Until recently it was taken as history that these *"Ottoman"* (more properly "Osmanli") Turks who followed Osman established themselves firmly in Asia Minor and built up a large dominion there at the expense of the older "Seljuk" Turks before they pushed into Europe. The more correct view now is that they "were masters of the whole Balkan peninsula before they had subjugated Asia Minor [eastward] as far as Konieh (Iconium)." [2]

It is even further argued that the genuinely Turanian "Turkish" element among these Ottomans was so small, and the number of Greeks and other converts from Christianity so large, that practically a new race and nation were created, and that it is unwise to consider the Ottomans as any real kin of the Mongols and Tartars.

This is an extreme opinion. The amount of Turanian immigration into Asia Minor since Manzikert (1071) had probably been very great. Through the whole of modern "Turkish" history there seem to run the traits and tendencies that are only accountable when traced clear back to the evil traditions of eastern Asia. For one thing, if the non-Turanian element among the Ottomans is so small, it is amazing that as a nation they succeeded only in war, and that they made such halting progress in the worthy arts of peace compared to Semites or Indo-Europeans.

Nevertheless, even from the outset the original Turanian stock of Ertoghrul's band was being constantly diluted. Slave women, the prey of kidnappers and conquerors, renegadoes—Greek, Armenian, Slavic, or even Italian, who found the ways of Turkish Islam profitable and easy,—and, as soon will be seen, boys drafted wholesale

[2] Dr. H. A. Gibbons in his original and penetrating monograph, "The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire," p. 30; an authority of decisive importance upon the rise of the Turkish military state.

from Christian families and taught to believe the Sultan's creed and to fight his battles—these were some of the factors by which Indo-European blood was mingled with that of Far Eastern Turan. The social institutions of the Orient seldom make for pure lineage, and, as will be seen, the successes of the early Ottoman rulers soon brought every kind of sensual, war-loving adventurer around them. Polygamy and apostasy speedily made this branch of the Turks very mixed assuredly in blood, but down to the end among them *the spirit and ideals of Inner Asia* have manifestly prevailed.[3]

Of course, at the outset Osman I could neither promise his warriors lands, gold and women, nor swell his forces by converts from Christianity. It is even argued that Ertoghrul had remained a pagan, and that the little principality around Eski Sheir only became Moslem in the days of Osman himself. In any case Osman and his followers had all the zeal of new converts for Islam. They, like the Saracens of Abu-Bekr and Omar, had their keenness for battle quickened all the more by mingling the hopes of paradise with more concrete hopes of terrestrial plunder. As early as 1299 Osman gained his first notable success by taking Yeni Sheir, a strong position which enabled him to become a menace to the chief Bithynian cities such as Brusa and Nicæa. In 1301 he won his first open battle with the Greek "heterarch" Muzalon near Nicomedia. The Seljuk sultanate was now dissolving. Probably there were the usual number of soldiers of fortune drifting about Asia Minor ready to serve any chief who could promise brisk fighting and abundant booty, and Osman was now a prosperous, independent emir, well able to enlist a goodly proportion of these hardy spirits.

Calamitous Reign of Andronikos II at Constantinople (1282-1328)

While this cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, was rising in Asia, there was utter mismanagement at Constantinople. Thanks to the Fourth Crusade, practically all the commerce of the Levant was now in Venetian or Genoese hands. The Palaiologoi emperors were in constant straits for money; and without money they could maintain neither fleets nor armies. In 1302 Andronikos I foolishly

[3] It is doubtless true that the present Stambouli Turks have little if any "Turkoman" blood in them, and "are a mixture of all sorts of European and Asiatic peoples." The Turks of Anatolia, however, who constitute the real strength of the race, appear to represent a much more decided Turanian element.

compounded with a band of 8000 Catalan mercenaries, led by a Roger de Flor, a peculiarly daring and outrageous leader of "Free Companies," to come to Constantinople and help the Greeks against their various foes,—Slavic, Latin, and Turkish.[4] Roger and his pitiless men were highly efficient warriors. They defeated the Turks in several battles; indeed, one chronicler says they might actually, if unhindered, have reconquered the whole of Asia Minor for the Greeks. But quickly enough the Catalans quarreled with their imperial paymaster. Soon the mercenaries were more busy in trying to exact money from Andronikos than in fighting the Infidel. The Emperor retaliated by having Roger assassinated. His followers seized the Gallipoli peninsula, but after devastating Thrace and nearly ruining the lands around Constantinople they marched away to Greece, to mix in the wars of the petty Frankish barons of Attica and the Peloponnesus.

Thus a military engine that might have ended the Turkish danger to Constantinople for all time, not merely came to naught, but left the Greek Christains poorer, weaker, more demoralized than ever. To check the Catalans and other foes Andronikos had actually invited Turkish bands into Europe; and, it is needless to add, they proved to be auxiliaries so dangerous that next it was soon needful to call in the Serbs to destroy them when they refused to return to Asia (1314). The Catalan incident was therefore one unmixed misfortune for the Greeks. Roger de Flor is not ordinarily reckoned one of the founders of the Ottoman Empire, but he and his men contributed mightily to make the success of the Turks possible.

Capture of Brusa (1326). Orchan I Becomes Emir (1326-1359 A. D.)

About 1317 Osman is said to have undertaken the siege of Brusa, probably the largest Christian city in Asia. His bands of horsemen, without knowledge of siege craft, were incapable of a close investment, but by constantly cutting off supplies, and by building small forts to enforce a blockade, he gradually wore down the courage of the inhabitants and the strength of the garrison. The Emperor, wicked and incapable, did nothing vigorous to save this city within easy reach of Constantinople. In 1326 Brusa at last capitulated, its commandant, Evrenos, being so disgusted over the

[4] The Ottomans were not yet a great menace to the Greeks, but farther south, in Mysia and Lydia, other Moslem emirs were pressing hard on such Christian cities as Philadelphia.

situation that he promptly became a Mohammedan—probably followed by many others of his nation. Osman died this same year of the first great success of the monarchy whereof he was practically the founder. The Ottomans were now no longer simply the possessors of the petty "Sultan's Front." They held a wide stretch of territory, with an important city for their capital.

Orchan I (1326-1359) completed the expulsion of the Greeks from Asia Minor, and lived to see Ottoman armies in Europe. The union of Osman and Malkhatoon was destined to produce great warriors through many generations. Although some of these rulers were of second-rate quality, none was to prove really worthless until after the death of the mighty Solyman the Magnificent (1566). Inasmuch as in Oriental despotisms the success of the government depends pretty directly upon the capacity of the despot, this fact was an asset of incalculable importance to the rising Ottoman monarchy.

That Orchan was an extremely able emir we may deduce from the results of his reign, but concerning him personally we are hardly better informed than about his father. He had a brother, Alaeddin, whom, so far from strangling (as later Sultans treated their brothers), he made his vizier and chief helper, and to this Alaeddin the Turkish historians have ascribed many of the civil and legal institutions whereon the new dominion rested. Especially he is credited with having organized the great standing army of professional soldiers which became the mainspring of the Ottoman war machine, replacing the armed vassals and volunteers whereon Osman had largely depended. He is also said to have assisted Orchan in creating the famous guard corps, the Janissaries ("New Soldiers"), of Christian youths seized from their parents, which so long was to be the terror to the foes of the Ottomans (see p. 244). Alaeddin, however, died in 1333, and his importance as a war and civil minister has been at the very least exaggerated.

The Ottomans Settle at Brusa. Capture of Nicæa and Nicomedia

The Ottomans were now ceasing to be merely a Turanian robber horde. In Brusa Orchan maintained what soon passed for a normal and well ordered Mohammedan state. The large Christian population on the conquered lands was on the whole decently treated,

barring the blood tax of youths for the emir's service; and it probably paid lighter imposts than under the degenerating rule of Constantinople. However, the system of taxation was calculated to bear particularly severely on Christian small farmers and peasants.[5] To escape this, and probably also to escape oppression by the Moslem chieftains to whom great landed "military fiefs" had been granted, the Christian peasants gradually either changed their religion or took up industrial life in the towns, where their conditions were better. The agriculturists of Asia Minor thus became largely Moslem, although in the cities the cross still defied extermination by the crescent.

Orchan is said to have been a lover of the works of peace. He undertook the building of roads and other public utilities. He also founded schools and established endowments to propagate the sacred and secular learning of Islam, but his whole fame really rests on his works as a military organizer and a conqueror. His father had barely lived long enough to hear of the surrender of Brusa. Across the Bosphorus the profligate Andronikos II had at last been deposed and banished to a monastery by his equally profligate grandson, Andronikos III.[6] The latter roused himself enough to make one last attempt to turn back the Ottoman advance in Asia and to save the great city of Nicæa, which Orchan was besieging. At Pelecanon, near Chalcedon, the army of the Basileus met the army of the Emirs (1329). The Greeks apparently fought fairly well, but Andronikos was wounded and quitted the field in no gallant manner. This his army broke and fled. There was no further attempt made to relieve Nicæa. The city of the Œcumenical Councils and the Creed surrendered even as Brusa had surrendered. Next, after an uneventful interval, in 1337 or 1338 (we deal with very imperfect annalists), Nicomedia, the last important Christian city in Asia, capitulated. The Greeks now held only a few places on the eastern shore of the Bosphorus directly opposite Constantinople. The Ottomans were ensconced near the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, and the whole Asiatic coast of the Sea of Marmora.[7] The next step would be into Europe.

[5] Christians could not serve (unless they came from the vassal states) in the Ottoman armies. They therefore paid a heavy "head tax" in lieu of military service.

[6] In his prison the deposed prince became "blind through tears" (as says the Greek chronicler), but one may suspect another agency.

[7] It is extremely difficult (even allowing for the impossible character of Andronikos III) to see why no greater effort was made to save the Bithynian cities for the

The advance of Orchan produced a certain anxiety in Christendom. Andronikos III threw out suggestions to the Pope that if effective help were sent him from the West it might be possible to heal the Græco-Roman schism. The only thing really done, however, was in 1344 when a Christian expedition seized Smyrna from a certain Turkish emir who was in no wise the helper of Orchan.

In the meantime, in 1341 Andronikos had ended a very evil life. His departure, however, brought not relief but only new calamities to the folk of Constantinople who still called themselves "Romaioi."

John Kantakuzenos: Ruinous Civil War Among the Greeks (1342-1354)

In 1341 the situation of the Greeks touching the Ottomans, although very dangerous, was not yet absolutely desperate. The

Greeks. Probably the Bithynian provinces were costing much to defend, were bringing in little revenue, and the court of the Basileus was desperately pressed for money.

Turanians were not yet in Europe. Orchan had no sea power, although "Turkish pirates" controlled by rival emirs were making life miserable around the Ægean. Orchan had neither huge dominions in Asia, nor as yet a very large army. If the Greek leaders had been at all alive to the situation and had dropped their feuds, if they had been willing to have attempted some combination with their Balkan neighbors, the Serbs and the Bulgars, the Ottomans might no more have crossed the Hellespont than had Alp Arslan's Seljuks. Apparently, however, the Providence, growing wearied of saving Christian Constantinople so many times, was at last resolved to make an end, and "Whom God wishes to destroy He first makes mad." That madness was sent upon John Kantakuzenos, "friend and counselor" of Andronikos III, whom the dying despot named as regent for his son, John Palaiologos.

At that time the Greek "Empire" consisted of hardly more than Thrace with the capital, the city of Thessalonica with a certain hinterland, various fortresses in Greece, and a portion of the Ægean islands. This was neither a large enough nor a prosperous enough realm to indulge in a rending civil war, especially as not merely the Ottomans but the Serbs (under the great Stephen Dushan) and the Bulgars were lifting themselves and threatening a deadly attack. Kantakuzenos was a man of intelligence, learning, and of very considerable capacity,[8] but an inordinate ambition for the throne led him first to betray his trust to his monarch and then the very safety of his country.

From 1342 to 1354 the annals of the Greek state are occupied with an utterly ruinous struggle to preëmpt the purple between Kantakuzenos and the young Palaiologos Emperor. When he found his usurped tyranny was slipping away, the unscrupulous pretender strove to exorcise the devil by calling in Beelzebub. He offered the territories of the Empire to the Serbs and the Bulgars as payment for aid. Worst of all he sent his daughter to the harem of Orchan and three times he let his "father-in-law," the emir, send his Moslem contingents into Europe to fight the battles of this "Christ-loving Basileus." Twice therefore the Turks came, fought, ravaged, spied-out the land, but were induced to go away.

[8] Kantakuzenos, after he had retired to a monastery, wrote a history of his own life and times. From his own words we can judge that he was in ordinary matters a man of refined instincts who sacrificed alike conscience and country to an insatiate desire to wear the purple of a very distracted realm.

The Turks Enter Europe at Kantakuzenos's Invitation (1353 A. D.)

At last in 1353,[9] when Kantakuzenos found his position at Constantinople again in peril, he called them yet again. A considerable force under Orchan's son, Solyman, crossed with the free consent of at least a part of the Greeks. An earthquake had thrown down the walls of Gallipoli, the strategically located fortress-town on the Hellespont. Solyman made haste to seize and fortify the same. No remonstrances from either faction of the Greeks could now induce him to quit a city of which (as he blandly replied) "the will of Allah rather than the force of arms had opened to him the gates."

Vainly now Kantakuzenos appealed again to the Serbs and Bulgars. They all answered after the manner of Czar Alexander of Bulgaria, "Three years ago I protested against your unholy alliances with the Turks. Now that the storm has broken let the Greeks weather it. If the Turks come against us, we shall know how to defend ourselves." The Bulgarians erred in their boast. It would have been far better for them if they and the Serbs had instantly dropped their feuds and marched straight to the aid of Constantinople, yet the reply was very natural.

At Constantinople a gust of popular indignation drove Kantakuzenos to abdicate (1354) and to end his days in a monastery. His evil work was done. The blood and treasure that should have been spent in resisting the Infidel had been exhausted in civil war. Now at last the Turks were fairly in Europe, and the Eastern Christians lacked the power to eject them. Far-sighted agents of the Venetian government warned the great maritime republic of the danger impending over Christendom, but Venice would not bestir herself for a great effort in behalf of her rivals, the Greeks. So the Turanians strengthened themselves unhindered.

Orchan died in 1359 while his armed bands were extending their possessions along the European shores of the Marmora. The "Sultan's Front" was already becoming a genuine "Empire" and was striding two continents.

[9] This seems the real date for the permanent entrance of the Turks into Europe, not 1356, as often given, although the latter was the time when they regularly fortified themselves in Gallipoli.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TURKISH ADVANCE INTO EUROPE (1353-1403). TIMUR THE TARTAR

Murad I (1359-1389). The Ottoman Capital at Adrianople

Orchan's eldest son, Solyman, an able captain and the leader of the advance into Europe, died shortly before his father. The Ottoman power thus passed to a younger son, Murad I (1359-1389), who was perhaps untrained for the duties of monarchy but who inherited able generals and a victorious army hungry for conquests. Murad (the "Amurath" of old writers of the Italian school) was of greater moderation and personal refinement than the run of the Ottoman rulers; he appears indeed as one of the most reasonable as well as capable of his entire line, but an Oriental monarchy so young as the Ottoman emirate would have been ruined if it had been allowed to stagnate. Besides, there is every reason to think Murad was stung with the ambition of his race to go forth conquering. He accordingly made every use of the incalculable opportunity which the civil wars of the Greeks had presented.

Already in Orchan's day John V Palaiologos had agreed to pay tribute to the Turkish emir and virtually to become his vassal, executing his orders and going on military and naval expeditions wholly in the Ottoman interest. Now followed worse things. Murad's begs in 1361 pushed straight up from their holds by the Hellespont into Thrace. They stormed and took Tchorlu, only forty-six miles from Constantinople. Then they swung westward towards Adrianople, the largest Greek city in the Balkan hinterland. The Palaiologoi attempted one open battle, were defeated, and Adrianople fell. In fifteen months the Ottomans became almost complete masters of the interior of Thrace. They followed this success in 1364 by seizing Philippopolis,[1] the frontier city towards Bulgaria.

[1] Another and perhaps more accurate account makes Philippopolis fall in 1361. One seems returning to the vague cycles of early Egypt or Babylon when trying to get exact dates for many capital events in early Turkish history.

This brought the Ottomans face to face with the Serbs and Bulgars. Constantinople and some scanty districts along the Black Sea and the Marmora indeed lay behind them, still held by the Basileus; but John V was too helpless now to attempt any serious demonstration in the invader's rear. The walls of Constantinople still loomed impregnable, but outside of her fortifications the hour of the old Empire of the Romaioi seemed to have struck.

Murad deliberately withdrew his capital from Brusa to Adrianople (1366), thereby proclaiming to the world that the Ottomans intended to become a European power. His father and grandfather had been unpretending indeed in their courts. The simplicity of the Turanian petty khans still clung about them. Orchan had distributed soup and bread to the poor with his own hands. Now at Adrianople Murad established something like a real seat of Empire. An elaborate Oriental court with its ceremonial began to be established. Plundered wealth hired in architects and builders for stately mosques and palaces. Adrianople thus quickly became the center whence were sent forth expeditions that rendered the Ottoman power terrible, and this city more than Constantinople is really associated with most of the traditions of Turkish greatness.

Murad, like many another Eastern despot, felt called upon to bestow a discreet patronage to letters and learning as these existed about him, but the master of such valorous armies could not himself write his own name. When he had to sign treaties he would put his hand in the ink and smear his fingers upon the paper! But the magnitude of his deeds was soon written all over the unhappy Balkan peninsula. Of course he had a remarkable opportunity. The great Stephen Dushan, the Serbian, had died in 1355 when actually on his way to take Constantinople and erect a firm Christian barrier against the Infidel (see p. 95). Serbia, which might now have become a great military power, was soon immersed in civil wars, and was usually on terms of hostility with the Greeks and the Bulgars; and the Bulgars hated the Greeks and Serbs quite as much as they did the Ottomans—until it was all too late.

Vain Attempts to Stop the Ottoman Advance in Europe

There was indeed much alarm even in Western Christendom over the Moslem advance. At the instigation of the Pope an ill-com-

pacted army of Serbs, Hungarians and Wallachians ("Roumanians") was dispatched against the invaders. But the very nature of the expedition was enough to make the Balkan Christians hesitate about being delivered by such deliverers. The distrust and hatred of the Papacy and anything inspired by the same was intense. "One does not want to detract from the genius of the early Ottoman sovran and from . . . the superb fighting ability of the Ottoman armies. But it must not be forgotten that each separate race in the Balkans preferred the rule of the Osmanlis [Turks] to that of their neighbors, and that the *one* point in which the Balkan races were of the same mind was that the Ottoman dominion was preferable to that of the Hungarians and Italians." [H. A. Gibbons.] Under these circumstances this first attempt at a Christian coalition against the Turks failed like so many of its successors. On the Maritza, Murad's general, Hadji Ilbeki, caught this host of "Crusaders" "sleeping in a drunken stupor." Many were slain, many drowned in the river, the rest were scattered to the four winds.[2] So ended the first great battle betwixt the Ottomans and European foes other than the Greeks.[3]

After that the grip of the Moslem upon Adrianople was too firm to be in real danger of being shaken. The only question now was, Could this Asiatic invasion of Europe be held in Thrace?

Piecemeal the Christians of the Balkan lands resisted Murad, and piecemeal they succumbed.[4] During the most of his wars with the other kingdoms, John V at Constantinople was the great emir's obsequious vassal. The story of how Bulgaria, Serbia and Bosnia were one by one reduced to Ottoman tributaries, how they several times revolted and were as often beaten down (on each occasion with the chains riveted tighter) need not be told in detail. By 1380 Murad's position was so strong in Europe that he could turn his energies against his fellow Turks in Asia. In 1381 the prince of Kermian (one of the largest emirates) bought peace by bestowing

[2] The Turkish historian Seadeddin thus rejoices in this victory: "They [the Christians] were caught even as wild beasts in their lair. They were driven before us as flames are driven before the wind, till plunging into the Maritza they perished in its waters."

[3] Here again it is nigh impossible to fix the date of this Ottoman victory; seemingly it took place not long after the capture of Philippopolis.

[4] At this moment when the two great Italian maritime republics might, if united, have done something to check the direful menace which the Ottoman power had become to their own joint interests, *Venice* and *Genoa* joined in their ruinous *"Chiogian War"* (1378-80). The quarrel began nominally over the possession of Tenedos, which each city was anxious to wrest from the Greeks. The war closed with Venice outwardly victorious, but grievously exhausted, and with Genoa temporarily prostrated. Meantime the Ottomans had tightened their grip on the peninsula.

his daughter on Murad's son, Bayezid, and by ceding a fraction of his dominions as her dowry. Another emir, Hussein, was actually willing to sell his little throne to Murad outright for a substantial price. Ali, prince of Karamania, more valorously risked a pitched battle and was roundly beaten, but the Ottoman was prevented from completing his successes in Asia Minor by a desperate attempt by Lazarus, king of Serbia, to throw off the Moslem yoke before it was too late.

Ruin of Serbian Independence. Battle of Kossova (1389 A. D.)

The Balkan Christians were at last quite aware of their terrible danger. Sisman III, king of the Bulgars, made some attempt to coalesce with Lazarus, yet the coöperation was only in name. Murad was able to take the Bulgarian strong cities one by one, and he finally besieged Sisman in Nicopolis and forced him to surrender. Bulgaria lapsed into a status little better than that of a subject province of the swelling Ottoman Empire. The Serbs, however, proved of stouter stuff. The traditions of Stephen Dushan were still vivid among them. Lazarus was a vigorous warrior, and he mobilized the whole fighting strength of his people and enlisted many Magyars and Wallachians from beyond the Danube. So the hosts came to the famous battle, sung by so many lamenting poets of the South Slavs, which largely settled the fate of the Balkan peninsula for centuries.

On the "Field of Blackbirds," the plain of Kossova, by the little river Schinitza, the battle was joined on the 27th of August, 1389. The tale is that the Ottomans were grievously outnumbered, and that many of the begs warned against taking the offensive, although the party for action overbore them by such resolute verses out of the Koran as "O Prophet, fight the unbelievers and hypocrites," and "Verily, a large host is often beaten by one smaller." Murad himself was so hesitant that he spent the whole night beseeching the aid of Allah, and even praying that he might die as a martyr fighting in the Djihad—a prayer that was granted.

The struggle that ensued was long and wavering. Tradition carries plenty of tales of Homeric valor on both sides; but the Christian forces lacked the compact discipline and united leadership of the Ottomans. The day was finally settled by a headlong cavalry

charge led by the Prince Bayezid. The Moslems won a complete victory, but Murad hardly lived to see it. Even while the fight was raging, a Serbian nobleman, Milosch, pretended to be a deserter, and got himself led before the Emir "to reveal great secrets." He knelt before Murad as if in homage, then bounded to his feet and inflicted a mortal dagger wound. Milosch was of course speedily hewn in pieces by the Janissaries. The Emir lived just long enough to see King Lazarus led into his presence a prisoner and to order his execution.

Murad was another of the builders of Ottoman greatness. The better organization of the army, the development of the system of military fiefs which did so much to swell the Turkish legions, the consolidation of many civil institutions are probably to be attributed to his initiative. When he died not merely were the Turks firmly seated at Adrianople, but their dominions reached to the Danube. The battle of Kossova had proved that it was beyond the power of the Balkan people to turn the intruders come out of Asia. The Turks would have to be halted by the men of Central and even of Western Europe if they were to be halted at all.

Bayezid I (1389-1402 A. D.). His Cruel Character. The Crushing of Bulgaria

Murad's eldest son, Bayezid I[5] (1389-1402), although a vigorous enough warrior, was of inferior stuff compared with his sagacious father and grandfather. On the very field of Kossova, in the presence of his father's corpse, he ordered the bowstringing of his brother, Yacoub, who had fought valiantly through the battle. This evil precedent of fratricide (hideously frequent in the Ottoman house later) was promptly justified by the maxim from the Koran, "Disquiet is worse than putting to death."[6] But the new ruler, whatever his crimes, was anything but the effeminate son of an active sire. Serbia had been beaten low, but was not yet quite crushed. Bayezid made a treaty with Stephen Lasarevich, its new king. Stephen undertook to pay a heavy tribute: he gave the conqueror his daughter for one of his wives, and he also promised to serve in the Turkish armies with a vassal contingent. This promise he faithfully kept. Bayezid owed not a little of his later successes to Serbian

[5] The "Bajazet" of older writers.
[6] Mohammed, of course, had never intended any such hideous construction of the text.

valor. Evidently Stephen despaired of effective help from anywhere in Christendom, and his only hope of keeping life and throne lay in propitiating the Infidel. He did not succeed in saving the political existence of Serbia, but at least his country was not as speedily devoured as was Bulgaria, and even during the centuries of slavery she preserved a few more privileges of local autonomy.

Probably Bayezid by his own genius could never have achieved the successes of Murad and Orchan, but he inherited a magnificent army, and the Balkan peoples were now at his feet. Therefore he passed from glory to glory until at last his pride brought him to an absolute fall. Beyond the Danube the Hungarians now were trembling for their safety, and their King Sigismund led an army into Bulgaria in 1392. His forces, however, were very inferior to the Turks, who soon chased him north of the Danube. The only result of his intervention was to complete the enslavement of the unhappy Bulgarians. The Ottomans took Tirnovo and pillaged the churches, casting the Holy Eucharist to dogs and leaving the slain to rot unburied. The leading clergy and nobles were deported to Asia. "To whom dost thou leave us?" groaned the wretched peasants of the departing patriarch. "To the Holy Trinity—now and through Eternity," he answered, not without pious courage. For nearly four centuries following "there was no more Bulgaria," but the Christian peasants kept to their faith. Then at last came resurrection to a Turanian nation which other Turanians had almost blotted from the maps.

The French Crusade. Its Complete Defeat at Nicopolis (1396 A. D.)

Sigismund of Hungary, however, was a courageous if not a very fortunate prince. He was a Catholic and was thus able to make a direct appeal to the Western world. Many great French nobles, including the Constable of France, the Count d'Eu, and especially John the Fearless, son and heir of the mighty Duke of Burgundy, enlisted for a crusade with about 12,000 French cavaliers and footmen. A considerable German contingent was likewise recruited. There were in addition Flemings, Luxembergers, and even certain English. Sigismund mobilized all available Hungarian forces, and joined to them Poles, Wallachians and Moldavians. It actually

seemed as if Catholic Christianity was about to make a tremendous effort against the Infidel now that Eastern Christianity had failed (1396).

The Crusaders, however, suffered from the first from divided councils and a multitude of masters. Sigismund wisely urged waiting until Bayezid took the offensive. The arrogant French cavaliers (these were the generations of Poitiers and Agincourt) insisted "they had come to fight, not to rot in a camp." Therefore the host advanced down the Danube, won a few successes and laid siege to Nicopolis, stoutly held against them by Bayezid's veteran general, Dogan Beg. The siege was carelessly pressed, because the Christians believed their arch-foe was then in Asia, but Bayezid had justified his proud cognomen of *Ilderim* ("Lightning"). He stood before the Christian camp with his full fighting power, almost before the Crusaders had ceased to treat the scouts who announced his advance as spies and traitors.

Sigismund and his allies held a hasty council. He wished to place the French cavaliers (of undeniable military value) at the critical point in the main "battle" where their final charge would be decisive. But the haughty nobles took it as a mortal insult if they were not placed in the front rank. The result was that when the array was set (September 24, 1396) the French knights, in defiance of the wishes of the king, instantly charged upon the Ottoman lines. Bayezid had craftily put many of his feeblest troops in the van. The French crashed through these and cried "Victory," but soon found their ranks shaken and their horses wearied, yet now obliged to fight all the picked corps of the Turkish army. The inevitable result was that the battle was completely lost. The premature charge of the French had broken up all the tactical arrangements of Sigismund. Each contingent fought for itself. The Wallachians deserted in a cowardly manner. The Hungarians fought better, but they tried in vain to rescue the French who were surrounded, and gradually worn down and slain or captured by the hordes of Asiatics. Finally Sigismund was compelled to flee, leaving nearly all the French as dead or prisoners.

Bayezid had been reckless in the sacrifice of his men. He is said to have lost nearly 40,000. In revenge he had all the French prisoners ("ten thousand") slain in cold blood, save some twenty-five great nobles from whom he could extract large ransoms. He

held his high-born prisoners until their redemptions had been paid, then dismissed them with words befitting a mighty monarch of the East: "If I feared you I would make you swear on your faith and honor, that never again would you bear arms against me. But no; I demand no such oath; on the contrary glad will I be, if you, on return to your country, muster an army and lead it hither. Ever will you find me prepared and ready to meet you on the field of battle. Report this my saying to any man you will, for I am always ready for, and desirous of deeds of arms, as well as for new conquests."

Bayezid Takes the Title of "Sultan." He Threatens Constantinople

This victory of course vastly increased the prestige of the new Ottoman monarchy throughout all Islam. The phantom Abbasside Kalif in Egypt wrote congratulating Bayezid as the "*Sultan* of the lands of Rum." His cavalry overran Bosnia and pressed up into Syria, devastating pitilessly. He marched also into Thessaly and seemed on the point of extinguishing the last Christian possessions in Greece. Already in Asia Minor he had annexed four more important emirates, driving their princes into disconsolate exile; and his eyes were now clearly set on Constantinople, with excellent prospects of taking it.

The Basileus was then Manuel II[7] Palaiologos (1391-1425), a prince considerably better than his predecessors, but the heir not so much to a throne as to a desperate situation. He tried to propitiate the Ottoman by allowing the Moslems to erect a mosque within the old capital, as well as by increasing his tribute, but no such half-measures would have saved the Second Rome from siege and very possible capture by Bayezid, had not a sudden succor appeared from the East. Orthodox Christianity had failed to check the Ottoman. Catholic Christianity had failed. Now a monarch calling himself a Moslem no less than did Bayezid inflicted upon that arrogant tyrant one of the most dramatic overthrows in history.

[7] Manuel II was perhaps the worthiest of all the Palaiologoi. He was of relatively high character, possessed real abilities as a literary composer, and showed distinct courage in hours of danger. "If I perish, I perish," he is reported to have said bravely, when terrified counselors urged him to sacrifice all to Bayezid. If the Greek "Empire" lived half a century after its doom was manifest, part of the credit should go not to Timur but to this brave and resourceful Basileus of a shrunken and demoralized realm.

Timur the Tartar Overthrows Bayezid at Angora (1402 A. D.)

Out of the East came "Tamerlane," Timur the "Tartar"[8] (1335-1405). He was of the family of Jenghiz Khan and his disciple in all things bloody, although a convert to Islam. It was about 1369 that he made himself master of what was left of the old Mongol Empire in Khorassan and Turkestan. From his capital, Samarcand, he reached forth for the conquest of the world. Presently he was numbering his subjects in Persia, Russia, Siberia, and into the confines of China and India. His myriads of swiftly moving horsemen gave the disposal of an incomparable war machine to this lame, gnarled warrior, who "countermanded no order which had once been issued," who made it a maxim "never to repent and never to regret," and who spared not himself in those hours of danger when, in his own words, he "put the foot of courage into the stirrup of patience." Bayezid was now at the summit of his pride. High boasts were coming from his lips—"I will feed my horse oats on the altar of St. Peter's in Rome." But just as he was about to attack not Rome, but Constantinople, arrived the tidings that Timur was moving steadily towards Asia Minor. The Near East was not large enough to contain two such potentates as Timur and Bayezid. Terrific war was inevitable.

The "Sultan of Rum" and the "Sultan of Samarcand" each received the fugitive enemies of the other and exchanged defiances. In 1400 Timur entered Asia Minor and took Sivas, slaying all the inhabitants and especially Bayezid's son, Ertoghrul. However, the Mongol leader did not attack the Ottoman immediately. He marched into Syria, devastating the Memluk provinces as far as Damascus, and then swung back and gave Bagdad another round of sack and massacre. Bayezid meantime covered him with curses and insults, sending word that he would give the wives of his rival "the triple divorcement"—the coarsest taunt one Moslem could speed to another. "The son of Murad is a fool!" remarked Timur pithily, and made his military preparations with the deliberation of a diabolical master of war.

The decisive battle was joined at Angora in the heart of Asia Minor on July 20, 1402. Bayezid is said to have had in line 120,000 men, including a strong Serbian contingent, but Timur had 200,000

[8] More properly "the Mongol." European form of his name "Tamerlane" is from "Timour-lenk" (= Timur the Lame).

to 300,000 with the added terrors of 32 Indian elephants, sure to demoralize his opponent's horses. The Ottoman regular corps and the Serbs fought well, and Timur, beholding how the latter strove, cried in admiration, "The wretches fight like lions!" But at the critical moment the Seljuk troops from Asia Minor, recently forced into the Ottoman service, gave way like cowards or worse. Bayezid, surrounded by his ever faithful Janissaries, fought till nightfall. Then his guard was cut to pieces. His horse fell when he tried to flee. The Mongols dragged him to the tent of Timur.

It is needless to explore the vigorous but not very important controversy whether Timur carried the captive Sultan about with him in an iron cage. It is possible that he really did this, which treatment was not incompatible, however, with a certain disdainful magnanimity. History is more interested in the fact that for the moment the whole redoubtable Ottoman war power seemed broken. The remnants of Bayezid's hosts were glad to seek Christian aid in fleeing into Europe. Timur sent his raiders clear across Asia Minor, burning and ravaging up to the Ægean, sacking Brusa and Nicæa with impartial cruelty towards Turk and Christian. The conqueror next laid siege to Smyrna (then held by the Knights of St. John) and stormed the city, following this inevitably by a massacre "without mercy to either age or sex," and erecting a pyramid of human heads outside the gates.

Eight months after his downfall Bayezid died in captivity—probably of sheer mortification and despair. Timur had been unable to advance into Europe. The lord of vast armies could hardly dispose of a cock-boat. He had had his fill of booty and devastation in Western Asia. Reports now came to him that China was ripe for conquest. He and his armies rolled eastward to preen themselves in imperial Samarcand preparatory to invading the Far East. But the fates, that had given to Timur seventy-one years of life and thirty-six of royalty and bloodshedding, at length were obdurate. He died of a fever at Otrar in the heart of Asia in February, 1405. So was China spared from ruin unspeakable, and the Levant perhaps from a second and more hideous visitation.

Timur had accomplished absolutely nothing in the Near East, beyond causing an incalculable amount of destruction, except probably to prolong the life of the Greek dominion at Constantinople for half a century.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY THE OTTOMANS (1453 A. D.)

The Ottomans Survive the Defeat of Bayezid

The overthrow of Bayezid should have been followed instantly by the destruction of the Turkish power in Europe. Nothing of the kind occurred. Probably all the Balkan Christians had expected Timur to be defeated, and had not formed the slightest plans as to how to utilize his victory. When the flying Ottoman fugitives appeared at the Bosphorus and Hellespont it is alleged that the Venetians sagaciously proposed to the Genoese to prevent them from escaping, but the Genoese deliberately started to ferry the Turks into Europe, doubtless for no small personal gain. Then the Venetians also transported the defeated Infidels, as certainly did the Greeks. Thus it was that a material part of the army defeated at Angora escaped.

The Ottomans, however, gave to their foes a new opportunity when the three sons of Bayezid, who had fled the battlefield, joined in civil war. Solyman, Musa and Mohammed struggled for the Sultanate until 1413. The Bulgars and Serbs seem to have made no real use of this capital opportunity to shake off their fetters. Again there was no concerted movement by the Christians. Only Manuel II, with the scanty resources of his "Empire," but without allies, did all that was possible to assist the most available prince, Mohammed, against his brothers. Thanks partly to Manuel's aid, Mohammed was therefore able to emerge at last as uncontested Sultan. Manuel had made him pay considerably for this Greek countenance. He was forced to cede back to the Basileus a good deal of territory in Thrace, but not Gallipoli or Adrianople. This was the final gleam of real prosperity for the Greeks.

Mohammed I (1413-1421) was a cool-headed and moderate prince who realized that, if the Ottoman Empire was to be saved, he must

keep from needless wars or any other form of adventure. Thanks to his quiet abilities, the European territories were kept fairly intact, and the Turkish emirates in Asia Minor were mostly recovered. The great opportunity for the Christians therefore soon slipped by. Timur lay dead in the confines of China. The Ottomans had reorganized their armies, recovered their courage, and were prepared again to resume their advance on the Infidel.

Murad II (1421-1451). He Besieges Constantinople Unsuccessfully

Mohammed I was succeeded by his son, Murad II (1421-1451), another prince of superior abilities. The new sultant indulged indeed in the premature dream of capturing Constantinople. He did not realize how strong the ancient walls still were. Manuel fought back stoutly, and the primitive cannon which Murad could bring to bear were hardly superior to the old-style hurling engines. At the crisis of the siege the Greeks were encouraged by an apparition—the *Panaghia,* the Holy Virgin herself, clothed in a violet robe, appeared upon the walls and struck terror into the assailants. Even the Turks believed some kind of miraculous power had been invoked against them. The attacks failed and Manuel increased Murad's troubles by stirring up a revolt in Asia against him. The Sultan therefore raised the siege (1422).

This was the last exploit of the now aged Basileus. Manuel II died in 1425. He left very small dominions, but six sons to share them. John VII took the throne at Constantinople; the others spent most of their energies as "despots" in the Morea (the ancient Peloponnesus) where the Greeks were now managing to eject many of the Frankish barons and Venetian garrisons, although themselves paying tribute to the Sultan. The other fragment of the Greek dominions, Thessalonica,[1] the second city in the Balkan peninsula, was definitely lost to the Turks in 1430; but John VII faithfully paid a heavy subsidy to Murad and in return was let alone in Constantinople. His dominions now only consisted of the capital itself, very few seaboard places near at hand, a few isles in the Ægean, plus the Morea—hardly enough for a respectable principality.

[1] Thessalonica had been taken from the Greeks by the Venetians. The Sultan drove out the Venetians but ignored all hints that he should hand back the city to John VII.

Murad Defeats the Hungarians at Varna (1444 A. D.)

Murad's main efforts had to be put forth against the efforts which Hungary made now in the eleventh hour, to do something effective to build up a barrier against the Ottoman. The Christians had found a heroic champion in John Hunyadi, regent of Transylvania, although this "White Knight of the Wallachians" was really perhaps more of a Roumanian than a Magyar. In 1442 Hunyadi won brilliant successes over the Sultan's begs. In 1443 he met Murad in person near to Nish, on the Serbian river, Morava. The Turks suffered a very severe defeat; but although such a disaster fifty years earlier might have broken their power in Europe, now it merely forced Murad to sign a disadvantageous peace which placed a certain part of Serbia under Hungarian suzerainty. No common disaster could uproot the Ottomans now.

What followed was not merely an outrageous act of bad faith, but showed how completely the Christians had failed to measure the real strength of the Ottomans. The Papal Legate Julian and other magnates were insistent that Murad was in extreme difficulties and that the treaty should not be maintained. "One need not keep pledges given to Infidels," ran their pious counsels. Hunyadi's resistance was overborne. An allied Christian army accordingly advanced into Bulgaria, but the force was very small for so ambitious an undertaking—only 10,000 efficient men, although Hunyadi and King Vladislav of Hungary were with them. Prince Vlad of Wallachia cried out in disgust when he came up with reenforcements, "The Sultan would have more huntsmen in his chase!"

Stung to the quick by this act of perfidy, Murad hastily remobilized [2] and hastened northward, a copy of the violated treaty fixed to a lance-point being borne along as a kind of standard. In the battle of Varna (1444) which followed Allah duly rewarded the oath-breakers. The Hungarians were utterly routed. King Vladislav, the evil-counseling Cardinal Julian, and many other Christian magnates or prelates were slain. Varna therefore simply repeated the story of Nicopolis.

[2] Weary of state cares, and in chagrin over his defeat, Murad had abdicated in favor of his young son, Mohammed, and retired to a kind of Moslem convent in Asia. At news of the breaking of the treaty he instantly quitted his retreat and resumed command of his veterans.

The Crushing of Bosnia. Scanderbeg in Albania

Murad did not invade Hungary, but he made sure of his power, south of the Danube. Serbia was now subjugated as never before, and the Turkish armies passed into Bosnia where the royal family was extinguished, while many of the chief nobles embraced Islam in order to save their landed possessions. The Serbs submitted the more willingly because of their hatred of the Catholic Magyars, and their fear that if the Turks were ejected by the Hungarian sword, all toleration for the "Orthodox" rite would vanish.[3] In 1448 Hunyadi, having conducted a new invasion, was again thoroughly beaten on the old battlefield of Kossova. After that the Magyar leaders were forced completely on the defensive and were no longer a standing peril to the Sultan's dominions.

One Balkan land indeed defied both Murad II and his son after him. Albania (old Illyria) had barely submitted upon her mountains to any invader and she did not welcome the Turks in the fifteenth century. In Scanderbeg [4] (Turkish for "Lord Alexander") the Albanians found an almost ideal leader for a desperate cause. The chief of as goodly a race of warriors as ever fought over hills and passes, he practically held at bay the whole strength of the Ottoman empire, and Albania did not submit herself until after his death in 1467. But this was merely an isolated resistance. Scanderbeg could succor no one, and Christian Constantinople was reaching that hour when the most powerful kinds of assistance were needed.

Christian Constantinople Before the Turkish Conquest

Melancholy is the story of the last generation of the New Rome under those princes who still claimed to be the true successors of Augustus and Constantine. The city had shrunk to a population of not over 180,000. There were gaping spaces within the walls,

[3] A Serbian tradition runs that about this time a South Slav Chief asked Hunyadi "What he expected to do concerning religion, if he were victorious?" "Compel the country to become Catholic," came the prompt answer. The same question was put to the Sultan, who replied: "I will build a church near every mosque, and leave the people at liberty to bow in the mosques or cross themselves in the churches according to their respective creeds."—The Serbs decided to submit to the Turks! Such stories illustrate well why the Balkan peoples seldom combined against the Infidel.

[4] His real name was George Castriot. His father had been a petty despot in Albania, and his son had been brought up as a page and a Moslem at Murad's court. In 1443 he returned to Christianity and revolted against the Sultan.

covered with the ruins of ancient buildings. The commerce which had once made the Basileus and his subjects wealthy had for a great part dwindled away, and what was left was largely in the hands of the Italians of Genoa and Venice, who maintained fortified "factories" in Galata and Pera, across the Golden Horn, which were really little foreign cities, exempt from the Emperor's jurisdiction. The Great Palace and many other famous buildings were now in utter disrepair: Hagia Sophia itself was showing dangerous signs of decay and had been hardly kept from collapsing. There were no longer riches, vitality, or energy in that "Greek" culture which had kept the lamp of civilization burning so long until Italy could begin to learn to read Homer and to appreciate classic marbles.[5] We are, in short, dealing with an exhausted state beyond recuperation, and the Palaiologoi princes are no wise to blame if they could not fend off the inevitable.

Only one thing could really have saved Constantinople—a great military exertion by Western Christendom, a scientifically conducted Crusade that might have broken the Turkish power. In an age when France was barely emerging from the Hundred Years' War, when England was on the verge of the Wars of the Roses, when Germany was nominally ruled by that most inefficient of emperors, Frederick III, this was simply asking the impossible; even if the Crusading fires had not been dead, and men had been truly awake to the Ottoman danger. The wretched Greeks indeed realized they were now practically in the state of a weak garrison trusting to the passive strength of their walls, and the emperors made pathetic efforts to buy Western help by compromising their religious scruples. John VII visited Italy, cast himself on the mercy of Pope Eugenius IV, and in 1438 was received into the Roman Church in the Duomo of Florence. He gained next to nothing thereby, save the benedictions of the Holy Father and the curses of his own people who looked on this compounding over the *Filioque* in the Creed as a kind of apostasy. Greek opinion, even later while the Moslem was closer at the gates, is summed up in the declaration of the Grand-Duke Notaras, one of the first of John's magnates: "Better a turbaned Turk in Constantinople than the cap of a Papal Legate!" Under

[5] In fairness it should be stated that in the fifteenth century there was a decided literary revival at Greek Constantinople. Histories and other works were written that are commendable both as to style and subject matter, but no amount of clever authorship could save the city from the Janissaries!

these circumstances the most the Christian Empire could hope for was an honorable burial.

Constantine XI Dragases, and Mohammed II. Turkish Preparations to Attack Constantinople

That honorable burial was provided by the successor of John, his brother Constantine Dragases (1448-1453), ordinarily reckoned as "Constantine XI"—the last Basileus of New Rome. Earlier he had been despot of the Morea. When he came to the throne Murad II was old and professed a willingness to let the Greeks alone, but a new Sultan was practically certain to bring in a new policy. Murad passed away in 1451, "the most humane and the best of all the Ottoman princes." Instantly his son Mohammed II (1451-1481) not merely seized the reins of power, but attested his personal character by having smothered to death his only brother, an infant at breast, the deed being done at the very moment the ignorant and unhappy mother was congratulating the new Sultan upon his accession.

From the outset Mohammed's desire to take Constantinople was hardly concealed, and it is useless to charge the Greeks with having precipitated the struggle by provocative blunders in their diplomacy. 1451 and 1452 were spent by both sides in all possible military preparations. Mohammed made peace with such neighbors as might prove troublesome, and, besides mobilizing huge levies of troops, he devoted himself with extreme energy to supervising the casting of the new-style cannon, with which alone he could hope to breach those walls that had defied his father. A Hungarian renegate, Orban, aided the Sultan to prepare cannon of enormous size even for a later day. The largest gun was cast at Adrianople. It required nearly a hundred oxen to drag its alleged weight, "70 tons," and it could hurl a stone bullet of 1200 pounds for two thirds of a mile. The ancient defenses which Theodosius II had built around New Rome were never intended to resist any such battering as this.

Futile Efforts of the Greeks to Prepare for the Siege

Constantine Dragases was terribly aware that the storm was coming. To enlist Western aid he received a Roman legate who celebrated mass in Hagia Sophia, and he proclaimed again the "Union of the Two Churches." This only made the bulk of the

Greek clergy and populace curse the Emperor and the Latins. The legate brought with him only fifty armed men. Hunyadi promised aid and so did the King of Aragon, but deeds never backed their promises. Practically the only real help sent to Constantine came from Genoa, which dispatched four hundred men-at-arms led by a very competent captain, Giustiniani. There were about 1600 other West Europeans from one nation or another, Venetians mostly, who aided in the defense. Latin Christendom thus almost left Constantinople to its fate.

Yet the city might still have held out at least this time had Constantine's own subjects put forth that desperate courage which covered dying Carthage and Jerusalem with glory. There were at least thirty-five thousand men of military age inside the walls. Some of these Greeks held back in cowardly apathy, others were disgusted at the treaty their ruler had made with the Papacy. The numerous monks, well-fed and idle, vigorously circulated a prediction that when the Turks had penetrated the city as far as the Tower of Taurus an angel would descend from heaven and hurl the misbelieving conquerors back to Asia! Only 4973 Greeks would enlist under the Basileus's orders, and he evidently felt himself too ill-obeyed to conscript the other men of military age even for labor on the defenses.[6]

Constantine thus faced his last ordeal with only a total of 8000 to 9000 troops to man a vast system of fortifications. He had also only a small fleet, although his mariners were of greater efficiency than the Turks, and the latter were not able to form a complete blockade, despite Mohammed's boasts that he had assembled "320 vessels." Constantinople therefore was able to offer to the Ottomans merely a passive resistance. The defenders were too scanty to risk powerful sorties. Their cannon were fewer and smaller than the Turkish, and their recoil shook down the old walls never prepared for mounting such weapons. Under such circumstances, unless the population suddenly rallied to the defense of religion and hearthstones, the siege could only have a single ending.

[6] Down thus to the very end we are conscious that in Christian Constantinople *we are dealing with a government and not a people.* There is a dramatic contrast between the frantic valor of Constantine and the sullen apathy of his subjects. With all their faults the later "Greek" princes and their nobles were neither cowards nor ignorant weaklings. They showed foresight and steadfast heroism in the crisis, but they seemingly could transmit nothing of their genuine valor to the plebeian multitude of those Romaioi who claimed to be political descendants of the most martial people that ever existed.

Siege of Constantinople (April 6 to May 29, 1453). Desperate Defense

Nevertheless Constantine Dragases made a fight which laid the Empire of New Rome upon the bed of honor. There were moments when it seemed possible that Mohammed might be forced to raise the siege. The Sultan, to be sure, brought down some 265,000 men, counting in the pioneers and irregulars.[7] All the levies of Moslem Asia Minor and the Balkans were there, plus a wretched contingent of the conquered Serbs. The Greeks had to defend five miles of landward fortifications against incessant assaults, and presently they had also to defend the sea-wall on the Golden Horn, when the Sultan caused a flotilla of light boats to be dragged across the Isthmus and launched on the inner harbor. The fortifications were still, however, very strong and could have defied anything but the new style artillery. On the 6th of April, 1453, the Ottomans began their attack, and the epic struggle did not end till the 29th of May. The skill of Giustiniani enabled the defenders to fling back the first onslaughts with heavy loss to the Turks. Then Mohammed's cannon played steadily on the gate of St. Romanos until four large towers had been beaten down, along with a wide stretch of the curtain walls, and the ditch had been nearly filled by the fallen débris. Finally, on the 24th of May, Mohammed sent Constantine a formal summons to surrender, to which the Basileus replied firmly, offering indeed tribute, but announcing he could not yield up his city while life was still in him.

Five days passed while the Sultan was working up his heterogeneous hosts to a pitch of fanaticism, and making preparations for the decisive assault. He promised to the soldiery all the movable spoil, both of valuables and captives, reserving to himself only the empty buildings. The dervishes made the Turkish camp resound with their cries, "There is no God but Allah!" Within the city there was the melancholy counterpart to these scenes, the last frenzied preparations to defend the great breach, and the Basileus receiving the Holy Sacrament in Hagia Sophia the night before the impending assault, with the populace crowding into the great church

[7] Possibly not more than 80,000 of this total were first-line troops, but in such a siege great numbers of less reliable soldiery were useful for auxiliary purposes.

in the fatuous hope that they were about to witness sudden deliverance by miracle.

Storming of the City (May 29, 1453)

The Ottoman attack began at dawn on May 29. The defender's missiles mowed down the inferior troops whom Mohammed sent first to the assault; but over the bodies of the slain the Janissaries and other picked corps were flung forward. For two hours, however, the Christian lines held, but the defenders' thin numbers were becoming terribly weary. Finally Giustiniani, who had been directing the Greeks with great gallantry, was mortally wounded and withdrew on board a ship. His departure dispirited the garrison, and a new rush of the Janissaries forced the last barriers. Soon they were fighting in the open behind the walls, and as the Ottoman myriads swarmed inside, Constantine knew that all was lost. "Is there no Christian present to give me the death?" he demanded in despair, then cast himself into the mêlée, and perished fighting as became an Emperor of Rome. His body was later found under a heap of slain, and the conqueror exhibited his head in one of the public squares.

Very familiar is the story of how Mohammed galloped through the breach at the Gate of Romanos, after resistance had collapsed, and how his raging soldiery had burst into Hagia Sophia dragging into captivity the silly thousands who still looked for the delivering angel. The Sultan rode through the Hippodrome and with his mace smote off the head of one of the dragons which still decorated the trophy once set up to record a great defeat of the Orient by the Occident,—by the Greeks to celebrate the victory of Platæa. He entered Hagia Sophia, marveled at the beauty of its dome and its 107 pillars of white marble, then struck down with his scimitar a soldier who was defacing the sculptured tracery. "Yours are the booty and captives, but mine the edifices," he proclaimed. Next he bade the muezzin summon the faithful to prayer in this new mosque, and himself mounted the high altar and called on the name of Allah and the Prophet.

Treatment of the City after Capture

Meantime the victorious army pillaged the city systematically. The slaughter indeed was not very great because prisoners were

more valuable than corpses. A considerable number of the Greeks also contrived to escape or were somehow ransomed, yet doubtless a great fraction of all the Christian women in Constantinople ended their days in Moslem harems. When Mohammed the next day entered the imperial palace he was calm enough to affect the philosopher. He repeated aloud the lines of the Persian poet Firdousi,—"The spider's web is on the royal curtain of the palace of Cæsar, the owl is the sentinel on the watch-tower of Afrasiab." Speedily thereafter he gave himself the luxury of ordering the execution of the Magnate Notaras and his entire family, along with many more noble Greeks, the bailo of the Venetian colony and sundry other important prisoners.

Ten days, however, after the storming of the city, Mohammed issued a proclamation declaring that the pillage was at an end, and assuring to the Greeks toleration and protection if they would quit their hiding places and return to their homes and callings. With the wisdom of the serpent he understood the advantage of playing upon the abhorrence felt by the Eastern Christians for the obnoxious Latins. Gennadios, an ecclesiastic who had been most vehement in his denunciation of compromise with the Western "Non-Yeasters," was forthwith drawn from his refuge, proclaimed patriarch of the Greek Church, and assured of very special protection and privileges, as well as wide jurisdiction over his own people. The capture of Constantinople therefore did more than destroy the political remnants of the East Roman Empire, it deepened incalculably the chasm between Eastern and Western Christianity and rendered the former the captive and instrument of the chief ruler of Islam.

Mohammed's victory in one sense only added one more large city to his dominions, but it also made the Ottomans more genuinely a European power. They enjoyed at last all the strategic advantages of an incomparable citadel. Hitherto, despite their victories, the control of the Asiatics over the Balkan lands had seemed provisional. Now there seemed little danger that the native Christians unaided could shake off their fetters.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TURKISH SETTLEMENT AFTER TAKING CONSTANTINOPLE

Cruel Character and Worldly Wisdom of Mohammed II

Thus it was the New Rome of Constantine Augustus passed under the power of *a horde of Oriental adventurers, Turanians by original descent, mongrels by polygamy.* This was the greatest victory ever won by Asia in her long debate with Europe. For many decades thereafter there seemed at least a possibility that the East might destroy all the fruitage of Marathon.

Hitherto for seven hundred years, like the Twin Rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, there had been two great currents of history in the Near East,—that proceeding from Christian Constantinople and that proceeding from the lands of Islam. Now the Christian current appears to be almost dried up. For over three centuries the annals of the Near East seem merely those of the Ottoman Empire. Until the new gleams of Greek and Serbian freedom, early in the nineteenth century, about all the historian can do is to relate how the sons of Ertoghrul the Nomad lorded it in the capital of the departed East Roman Empire.

Few among the world's bloodstained empire builders command less sympathy than Mohammed "the Conqueror." Pitiless, faithless when it pleased his policy, remorseless, delighting in refined tortures and unspeakable immoralities, we can hardly find in him even those flashes of high magnanimity which redeemed the characters of Jenghiz Khan and Timur the Tartar. He is said to have "chosen as his models Alexander and Julius Cæsar"; but he assuredly knew nothing of the real genius of these paladins save that they were successful warriors. Nevertheless, with all his sins he was undoubtedly one of those "children of this world who are wiser in their generation than the children of the light." He could speak Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Greek and Slavic. He knew after a fashion geog-

raphy, history, and the sciences. He had a true taste in architecture. He allowed the Italian artist Gentile Bellini to take his portrait—a daring thing for a Moslem to encourage, and in settling in his new capital and arranging his enlarged empire he displayed a prescience and a cunning almost diabolical.

The New Order Established by Mohammed II. Stamboul

The new lord of so great a city must needs set up a court corresponding with his pretensions to Empire. Remote now were the days of the simplicity of the first Ottoman emirs. Mohammed II solemnly proclaimed that henceforth he would live in the secluded magnificence of a Basileus or an Abbasside Kalif. He issued a formal *Kanun* (edict) to his subjects—"It is not my will that anyone should *eat* with my Imperial Majesty. Our ancestors formerly were wont to eat with their ministers. This custom I have abolished." Henceforth the sultans were to live as sacro-sanct autocrats, communing (when not in their harems) chiefly with their own greatness.

This was only one act indicative of Mohammed's mood and policy. The formative days for the Ottoman power were over. A great military state was in existence and in possession of one of the most strategically located cities in the world. Constantinople now, instead of being the seat of what had dwindled down to a very small as well as feeble principality, became again the capital of practically the entire Levant.[1] The sultan wished to make his conquest, "Stamboul" (the name probably came from a Turkish corruption of the Greek "Εἰς τὴν Πόλιν"), into the metropolis of Islam and its secular capital, but he had wisdom enough to see that the economic prosperity of his dominions required that non-Moslems should be treated with relative indulgence. Of course the old city of the "Very Christian Emperors" underwent a decisive transformation. Hagia Sophia became a mosque. Dirty whitewash covered over Justinian's brilliant mosaics; four minarets were added around the exterior.[2] Many other great churches were similarly converted for the uses of Islam. On the site of the imperial necropolis, where so many *Autocrators* and Cæsars were buried, Mohammed built a new mosque which he called by his own name. The conqueror delighted in

[1] Of course this was not absolutely true until Selim I conquered Syria and Egypt.
[2] Only one of these was built by Mohammed II; later sultans added the others.

covering his new capital with new buildings in the now standardized Saracenic Mohammedan style—mosques, hospices, schools of Islamic learning, and a new and immense palace. Constantinople thus took on somewhat the outward aspect of Bagdad in the fairest days of the Kalifate.

But nothing destroyed the intensely cosmopolitan character of the inhabitants. The population had so dwindled under the Palaiologoi that there was now room for a great influx. The Greeks who survived the sack and slaughter were assigned ample districts close to the walls (the "Phanar" region), while the heart of the old city was given over to the inrush of Ottomans. Mohammed also not merely permitted but sometimes even compelled whole villages of Serbs, Bulgars, Armenians, and Wallachians to settle in Constantinople, as well as men of every race and clan of Islam.

Treatment of the Christians

The immediate government of the Christians was carefully entrusted to the heads of their own religion, with powers to flog, imprison, nay to execute, but who were held strictly responsible to the Sultan for the manner in which they discharged their office. It has also been seen how Gennadios was proclaimed patriarch of the Greek Church almost while the blood of his slaughtered countrymen ran warm on the pavements (see p. 211). In this appointment Mohammed acted upon a fixed and cleverly designed policy. The first monarch of Islam caused the Greek clergy to go through the forms of electing this new head. Then with pomp he installed Gennadios. "Be patriarch," commanded Mohammed, "and let heaven protect thee! Use my friendship under all circumstances. Enjoy all the rights and immunities of thy predecessors." The patriarch was led away from the Sultan upon a magnificent horse, escorted by the great begs and aghas of the court. Many churches and large monasteries were restored to the Christians. They were given perfect freedom to celebrate their religious festivals.

The patriarchs in a certain sense therefore seemed gainers by the conquest. No Sultans bothered about their orthodoxy, or the manner in which they governed their clergy, as had so many of the Christian emperors. The patriarch became in fact practically the secular ruler of all the thousands of Greek Christians in Constanti-

nople. He had his courts, his dungeons, his police. If the pious grieved in private that an Infidel should virtually appoint the patriarch whenever the throne became vacant, the happy recipient of imperial favor was not likely to complain of the selection. Inevitably (as in the case of Gennadios) the Sultans were likely to appoint only ecclesiastics who hated the "Roman Schismatics" with a perfect hatred, and who regarded it better to submit to Moslem despotism than to insert the *Filioque* in the Creed. By this stroke therefore Mohammed II made the control of the Christian population tenfold easier. Their native rulers were the Sultan's nominees, and with every motive for submitting to Moslem rule, so long as the latter was tolerable.

Later Career of Mohammed II. Trebizond and the Morea Conquered

So the Ottoman rooted himself in Constantinople. Mohammed reigned twenty-eight years after his greatest victory. He was a restless and on the whole a successful warrior, but his later deeds have the element of anticlimax. The fall of their old capital did not quite end the last remnants of Greek political power in the Levant. At Trebizond, in ancient Pontos, David Komnenos still called himself "Basileus" over a considerable strip of coastland. In 1461, when Mohammed marched against certain Moslem emirs in Anatolia who had defied him, he easily overwhelmed this very feeble Christian state, and David Komnenos was strangled in captivity in 1470. Somewhat earlier the last Palaiologoi princes, who were still despots in the Morea, had met their fate. Southern Greece had seen one devil's dance, joined in by Greek "archontes," Albanian bandits, Venetian naval raiders, and French and Italian soldiers of fortune. All the decent elements apparently welcomed the Sultan when he came to the Morea in 1458-1459. The bishop of Tegea gladly opened the city gates to him. In 1459 the last of the Palaiologoi fled to Italy, and the writ of the great "Padishah" (Emperor) ran in nearly all the lands of old Hellas.[3]

Mohammed II had also wars in Bosnia, Serbia and Herzegovina, where he quenched almost the last embers of South Slavic independence. (For the case of Montenegro, see p. 252.) He broke up the Genoese trading stations in the Crimea, and the Moslem

[3] A few fortresses in the Morea,—Coron, Modon, Pylos and Argos,—remained for some time in Venetian hands.

Tartars of that region cheerfully acknowledged his suzerainty. He created a formidable navy and waged a long war with Venice for the control of the Ægean. In 1470 he took Negropont (Eubœa), and finally in 1478 the Turkish cavalry found their way through the Alpine passes and over the Isonzo and the Tagliomento, so that from their very lagoons the Venetian patricians could see the light of the burning villages. In 1479 therefore Venice, left without allies, was fain to make peace, paying a tribute and ceding Lemnos, but receiving in return considerable trading privileges.

Yet Mohammed's military career was not one of unbroken success. In 1456 he made an elaborate attempt to take Belgrade—the mighty fortress which barred a Turkish advance on Hungary. Hunyadi, the old foe of the Moslem, made a glorious and successful defense, although he died, however, almost immediately after inflicting this real setback upon the Infidel. Finally in 1480 the Sultan sent a powerful expedition against those warrior-monks, the "Knights of Rhodes," whose galleys were almost sweeping the Ægean of Moslem commerce. The knights beat back every attack, and the Turkish admiral had to skulk home with heavy loss. Another Moslem armament elsewhere was more successful. In 1480 the Turks raided and seized Otranto in Southern Italy, shipping away 12,000 captives. The Sultan, like Bayezid I, was now boasting how he would stable his horses in St. Peter's when the hand of death overtook him (1481).

Bayezid II (1481-1512 A.D.). His Civil War with Djem

The next two Ottoman reigns brought few new disasters to Christendom. In the first reign there was a disputed succession and a civil war. In the second a most sanguinary ruler turned his sword on his fellow Moslems. Mohammed II left two eligible sons—Bayezid II and Djem. The former promptly gained the possession of the capital and the guard corps, and emphatically declined the proposal of his brother to divide the power. "Empire is a bride who belongs to one only," he asserted. Djem raised considerable armies, but was repeatedly beaten, and finally he fled to the Knights of Rhodes, who shipped him to Europe, and he ended his days in 1496 at Naples after a long gilded captivity at the Papal Court, whither his brother sent liberal subsidies to have him held fast.[4]

[4] Few chapters in the history of the intercourse between Christian and Moslem are less edifying than that of the treatment of Prince Djem by the Latins with whom he took refuge. He had gone to Rhodes expecting that the Knights of St. John would

Bayezid II (1481-1512) was of much lighter metal than many Ottoman sultans before him. Although he had wars with Venice and Hungary in which sufficient misery was caused to the innocent, there was no great boundary change in Europe. The Sultan himself, more pious than energetic, allowed his three very active sons, and especially Selim, the youngest, to obtain the upper hands in the government, particularly in the army. In 1512 this reign ended when the Janissaries and the viziers presented themselves at the palace, crying menacingly, "Our Padishah is old and sick; in his stead we demand Sultan Selim!" Bayezid was fain to abdicate. His son and successor spoke him fair, but the third day after his deposition the ex-monarch died:—"one knows not precisely whether of grief or of poison."

Selim I "the Grim" (1512-1520). Fratricide. Conquest of Syria and Egypt

Selim I (1512-1520) goes into history as *"Selim the Grim,"* or, as the Turkish chroniclers record him, "Selim the Inflexible." No ruler in all the pitiless house of Osman cared less for human life than he. He had ten brothers and nephews living when he deposed, and probably murdered, his father. All of them he hunted down inexorably and executed. It is recorded that when his brother Korkoud was taken, the captive obtained leave to write a touching elegy ere the bowstring was tightened. Then they bore his corpse and his verses to the Sultan. Selim wept over both; proclaimed three days of mourning; put to death fifteen Turkomans who had betrayed Korkoud—and next ordered the furious pursuit of Ahmed, another brother, whom he duly wept over in turn, when Ahmed too had been taken and strangled.

This prince, who practically exterminated his own family, and who (to quote a Venetian) "was the most cruel of men, who dreamed only of conquests and war," nevertheless took more than a pretended

grant him an honorable asylum (1482). Speedily the cavaliers compounded with Bayezid II for a subsidy of 40,000 ducats per year in return for keeping Djem in firm custody. In 1483 he was sent to France, and there held in captivity for seven years in castles belonging to the order. In 1489 he was ceded by the knights to Pope Innocent VII and transferred to Rome. Here he lived in luxurious captivity until Innocent died and Alexander Borgia compounded directly with the Sultan (the arch-foe of Christendom) for a continuation of the subsidy, or, if the Pope preferred to put Djem to death, 300,000 ducats, cash down. In 1495, when Charles VIII of France invaded Italy, he took possession of this valuable prisoner, but before handing him over Alexander Borgia seems to have given Djem (from whom he could profit nothing further) a slow poison from which he died (1496).

interest in learning and letters. He delighted in Persian poetry, enjoyed reading lives of Cæsar and Alexander, and loved to discuss nice points of Moslem theology with the ulemas. Terrible of course he was to his foes, but most terrible of all to his friends. To be appointed by him to a high office was almost equivalent to a sentence of death. Seven grand viziers in his not long reign did he execute. "Mayest thou become vizier to Sultan Selim!" became a standard curse through the Levant. The least blunder, the least crossing of a whim, meant the summons of the black mutes with the bowstring. All the great officials carried their wills about their persons, and took formal leave of their families when they were summoned unexpectedly to the imperial divan. Some of them openly jested with their master about their impending fate. "My padishah," said one grand vizier, "sooner or later thou wilt put thy faithful slave to death. Vouchsafe me a short interval wherein to arrange my affairs and prepare for the next world." Loud laughed the Sultan: "I have long been meditating killing thee," he replied, "but no one at present is fit to take thy place, so I cannot now oblige thee." Many other officials however were less indispensable.

Before such a ruler the Ottoman nation, soldiers and civilians, crouched in helplessness, fascinated even as charmed birds before the snake. Probably in their eyes Selim to a large extent justified his cruelties by the success of all his undertakings. But his valor largely spent itself against the Persian "Shiah" heretics, and against the Memluk rulers of Egypt. In 1513-1514 he invaded Persia in force and defeated the formidable Shah Ismail in a great battle. The result was to carry the Turkish frontier far across Armenia and well into Mesopotamia. The turn of the Memluks was next. This military aristocracy of "slaves" fought well but could not cope with Selim's new batteries of field artillery. In 1516 he conquered Syria, and in 1517 after a bloody struggle captured Cairo and made Egypt into a Turkish pashalik.[5] The over-lordship of Arabia and the guardianship of holy Mecca and Medina simultaneously now passed to the Ottoman Sultan, who arrogated to

[5] The Turkish conquest of Egypt was a hard commercial blow to the Venetians, who had long carried on a profitable traffic with India through the Moslem middle-men of Alexandria. Selim did not indeed refuse the Venetians all trading privileges in Egypt, but Turkish policy soon did everything possible to divert the streams of traffic to Constantinople. However, the opening of the direct route to India by the Portuguese had already wrought Venice an economic injury from which she never truly recovered. It is, of course, not true that Columbus was impelled to undertake his voyage, thanks to the ruin of the Indian trade via Egypt by the Turks.

himself the proud title of "Kalif" with its implications of supremacy over all Islam.[6]

In 1520 this fearful warrior died just as he was about to turn his arms against the Christians. With him passed a potentate whose continued reign would have spelled misery for mankind.

[6] At Cairo there was living under Memluk patronage a shadowy line of "Kalifs" who claimed descent from the old Abbassides of Bagdad. The last of these, "a poor devil named Ed-Mostansir," was easily persuaded to cede his pretensions to Selim.

CHAPTER XX

THE TURKISH APOGÉE UNDER SOLYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT (1520-1566). LEPANTO (1571).

Fortunate Reign of Solyman

When Byzantium became Constantinople the apparent boundary between Occidentalism and Orientalism ran east of the Euphrates. When Constantinople became Stamboul that boundary practically ran along the Danube. Soon the question seemed to be whether it must not run along the head waters of the Elbe and Vistula. The West appeared completely on the defensive.

Few have been the princes who have come to Empire under more fortunate public and personal surroundings than Solyman I "the Magnificent" (1520-1566). He was the contemporary of Charles V, of Francis I, and of Henry VIII. In many respects he was worthier as well as mightier than any of the three. He was an only son, and did not have to make the fearful choice between peril and fratricide. He was the tenth ruler of the Ottomans, he reigned also in the tenth century of the Hegira, and "ten" has always been a lucky number among Orientals. His name was that of a King venerated by countless legends through the Near East. But he had also personal qualities which made him worthy of his fortune. Many reliable contemporaries describe him as handsome and robust, intelligent and magnanimous, vigorous to strike but usually wise enough to spare. Though the blood of a trusted vizier and of two sons stained his hands, he was not (as Eastern despots go) to be counted sanguinary. Selim, with all his sins, had possessed the intelligence to give his heir a good education and to allow him a real share in the government. It was therefore no inexperienced youth who became Padishah in 1520.

During a long reign Solyman never allowed his head to be turned by success and adulation, the accustomed ruin of despots. Wrote an ambassador of Charles V of his behavior following one of his

POLAND
Vienna
Pressburg
AUSTRIA
Chotin
Podolia
Kemenets
RUSSIA
St.Gotthard
Buda
Hungary
Moldavia
Venice
Save R.
Mohacz
Transylvania
Khanate of the Crimea
Belgrade
Bosnia
Wallachia
Circassia
Serbia
Danube R.
Bulgaria
Albania
Roumelia
Constantinople
Georgia
Otranto
CORFU (Venetian)
Brusa
Armenia
Anatolia
Athens
Kurdistan
Morea
PERSIA
Candia
RHODES
Aleppo
Mesopotamia
CRETE (1669)
Famagusta
CYPRUS (1571)
Damascus
Bagdad
Syria
ARABIA
Basra
Persian Gulf
Cairo
EGYPT
Boundary at death of Mohammed II, 1481
Added to Empire, 1481-1683
N.B. Besides territories here shown, the Sultans had the suzerainty over the North African states of Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers, and nominal control of all Arabia.
THE EXPANSION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Scale of miles
0 50 100 200 300

last victories, "Those who saw his face in this hour of triumph failed to detect therein the slightest trace of undue elation . . . so self-contained was the heart of that grand old man, so schooled to meet each shift of fortune however great, that all the applause and triumph of that day wrung from him no sign of satisfaction." Thirteen times he went personally on campaigns and won great victories, but he was no vulgar warrior. Nearer than any other Ottoman ruler Solyman also came to being a great civil organizer and administrator, and the institutions which he founded or strengthened prolonged the life of his Empire. Solyman "Kanouni" (the "Law Giver") the Turkish historians often called him, but to the awestruck Italians and other Occidentals this "Grand Signor of the Turks" is almost always "Solyman the Magnificent" and such is not unfittingly his title in general history.

Vast Power of the Ottomans. Conquests of Belgrade (1521 A. D.) and of Rhodes (1522 A. D.)

To describe even the important events of a reign of forty-six years for a ruler like Solyman is impossible save in a very detailed treatise. Here one can only select a few of those things which affected the destinies of later generations. Selim had practically destroyed all the other Moslem powers of Nearer Asia, unless the Ottomans wished to enter upon a war of extermination with the Shiah rulers of Persia. The Moorish states of North Africa were as a rule glad to acknowledge the Turkish sultans as suzerain [1] in order to get protection against the waxing power of Spain, now under the vigorous direction of Charles V. It was inevitable therefore that, unless Solyman should resign himself to non-military inactivity (a thing under existing conditions unthinkable), he should renew the attack on the Christian West. The times were still very propitious for his enterprise. Charles V disposed of a mighty monarchy, but his German dominions were being split asunder by the rising tide of Protestantism. The rival kingdom of France was even willing to seek allies in the Infidel (see p. 223). Italy was rent between the French and Spanish interests. Only two states were left really to oppose Solyman,—

[1] Morocco was never really subject to Turkish lordship. Its "Emperor" would not treat the Ottoman sultan as even a religious superior: but Morocco was so remote that its defiance presented no real problem to the Padishahs.

Venice and Hungary. These were decidedly feeble powers compared with the huge Ottoman monarchy. He could deal with them.

Within the first year of his reign Solyman avenged one of the reverses of Mohammed, his grandfather. He took Belgrade, the great barrier fortress against the successful invasion of Hungary. The Hungarians had foolishly left the place poorly garrisoned and Ottoman intrigue made the South Slav auxiliaries of the Christians slink away, whereupon the 400 valiant Magyars, who remained after repulsing twenty assaults, were fain to capitulate (1521). The Sultan made the Cathedral of Belgrade into a Mosque. All now seemed ready for an advance northward, but there was a task remaining in the Ægean and Solyman turned aside for that.

Rhodes under the Knights of St. John had been a thorn in the side of the Ottoman, a nest of "Christian Piracy," commanding the sea route to Egypt. In 1522 Solyman attacked this fortress harbor by sea and land. The Knights made a valorous defense. One hundred thousand Turks are said to have perished ere the end came, but no help was sent to the Christians from the West. The Knights were only a little band of military monks clinging to a ruined city. So at last the gallant Grand Master De l'Isle Adam surrendered on honorable terms. Solyman was a chivalrous foe. He even tried to console the Grand Master for his misfortune. "Not without sorrow," said he to his vizier, "do I force this Christian to quit his land and property in this his old age." None the less the capture of Rhodes made the Sultan feel himself to be the master of his own house. He could turn away now from the Ægean.

Solyman's Alliance with France against Charles V and Hungary

Time fails to tell of how Solyman waged wars with the Shah of Persia and took and annexed Bagdad (1535), or how the Turkish power was extended over Arabia and down the Red Sea, so that Aden became an Ottoman port, and how ships under the Turkish flag fought with Portuguese ships in the Persian gulf and even in the waters of India. The Sultan's main efforts were mostly put forth against the Christians of the West. These were the days when Charles V of Spain and Germany and Francis I of France

were at deadly grips. The latter potentate at least had no direct contacts or grounds for hostility with the Turks. He was perhaps indeed willing to play with the idea of a Crusade, but all talk thereof vanished when in 1525 Francis was taken prisoner by Charles in the once famous battle of Pavia. In desperation he (or his regents in France) sent envoys to Constantinople imploring the arch foe of Christendom to come to the rescue of the "Very Christian King."

Few other things better could have flattered Solyman's pride or more fitted in with his policy. It was speedily announced that "The great Padishah, moved by pity, is resolved to make war on that Charles who is so filled with evil intentions." And Solyman thereupon wrote in terms of "superb generosity and pride" to the unfortunate Francis, "Thou hast sent to my 'Gate' [*Porte*] the refuge of monarchs, thy faithful envoy. . . . Thou hast made known thy captivity, and besought help for thy deliverance. All that thou hast said, having been laid at the foot of my throne, the refuge of the world, my imperial knowledge has comprehended in detail . . . (Be not discouraged at thy lot). Our glorious ancestors (May Allah illumine their tombs!) have ceased not to thrust back their enemies and to conquer their lands. We also will march in their footsteps. . . . Night and day our steed is saddled and our saber is girded."

Battle of Mohacz (1526). Conquest of Hungary

Having given this answer to one of the most top-lofty monarchs in Christendom, Solyman forthwith invaded Hungary, the nominal ally of Charles, but a state that now received in its agony little save good counsels from the preoccupied Emperor. The young King Louis was inexperienced and surrounded by wrangling advisers. There was grievous disaffection among the native magnates. When Solyman advanced up the Danube, the "bloody sword" (the sign for mobilization) was indeed carried through Hungary, but barely 30,000 men rallied at the call. This was really abandoning the kingdom, for the Sultan had 100,000 men and 300 cannon. Nevertheless the Magyar lords at last made a resolute stand on the marshy plain of Mohacz (August 28, 1526). The Hungarian cavalry charged magnificently and won apparent advantages—but

then, even like the Persians and the Memluks, were mowed down by the Turkish artillery. "Nothing but a freak of chance could have averted the discomfiture of the Christians, for the battle was controlled by no commander, and the divisions acted separately." Finally before the arquebuses of the Janissaries the Hungarians broke and fled. Over 20,000 of them perished, including King Louis and eight of his bishops. Solyman magnanimously mourned over his royal enemy: "May Allah be merciful unto him. . . . I came indeed in arms against him, but it was not my wish that he should thus be cut off, while he had scarcely tasted the sweets of life and royalty."

The "Destruction of Mohacz" practically delivered Hungary over to the Ottoman even as the battle of "Xeres" had delivered Visigothic Spain to the Saracens. The strength of the nation was almost broken. The death of Louis left the succession to the throne in despute. Ferdinand of Austria (Charles' brother) was claimant in the great Hapsburg interest. Solyman, however, supported one Zapolya, a Transylvanian prince, who was willing to buy a tinsel crown by becoming the Sultan's obsequious vassal. The mighty Sultan himself promptly seized Buda, the capital. Ere long a Turkish pasha lorded it in the palace of the Magyar kings, and more than half of Hungary remained a part of the Ottoman Empire for 147 years, with Buda constituted the "Avenue to the Holy war," and the "Buckler of Islam." [2] Vainly did Ferdinand negotiate for the evacuation of Hungary: "Why not for Constantinople also?" threw back the grand vizier; and Solyman sent nine Christian prisoners to the Hapsburg archduke with the ominous message, "Tell your master that he should prepare himself for our visit!"

Solyman Repulsed at Vienna (1529). His Vast Naval Power. The Turks at Toulon

In 1529 Solyman set forth with 250,000 men and 800 Danube vessels fully intending to master Vienna,—already the first city of central Europe. But his advance, though apparently irresistible,

[2] The position of Hungary in Modern Europe cannot be understood until it is realized how, during this long period, the Magyars were ground between the Ottoman millstones, and partially lost their position as an enlightened Christian nation. When the Turks were at last driven out (see p. 271), Hungary had been to a large extent "Balkanized." It retains many of the earmarks of the unhappy process unto this day.

was too much delayed. Only on the 27th of September was he able to invest the Austrian capital. The chief defenders, Count Nicholas of Salm and his compeers, although they had only 16,000 men and 72 cannon, made a desperate and very skillful resistance. Vienna was not as Constantinople. The civilian population worked heroically on the ramparts. The University students formed in military companies. Every assault was beaten back, while the cold autumn rains soon wrought havoc among the unaccustomed Orientals. After throwing away his men by thousands in the breaches, the Sultan had to raise the siege. He could not really cover his discomfiture by sending a boasting message to the Viennese: "Know that we are not come to take your city, but to fight your archduke who dares not join with us."

So the Ottoman flood had reached its high tide,—though men as yet knew it not, and though it was to swell equally high in 1683. The great Sultan hardly felt that he had sustained a serious reverse. In 1533 he haughtily consented to make a temporary peace with Ferdinand for the Austrian lands, retaining himself the bulk of Hungary, and treating the Hapsburg prince not as an equal, but as an unreliable vassal barely admitted to grace.[3] The war, however, went on with Charles in the Mediterranean. Solyman had now in his service the ships and captains of the Barbary Corsairs, those satanically inspired leaders whereof the great admiral "Barbarossa" (Kheir-ed-Din) was the chief, and whose huge fleets of galleys, propelled by thousands of lash-driven Christian slaves, were the terror of the Italian and Spanish coasts. During most of Solyman's reign France and Spain were embroiled, and the French (despite many qualms at striking hands with the Infidel) were allied with the Padishah. The most curious and equivocal incident came in 1543-1544 when Barbarossa appeared at Marseilles with a Turkish fleet, was joined by a French fleet under Admiral d'Enghien, and then the ill-assorted allies besieged and took the city of Nice on the Riviera, although unable to reduce the citadel. After this undertaking the Turks wintered in Toulon, Francis I compelling all women and children to leave the purely French city for many months, lest they suffer strange things from these unaccustomed guests.

[3] During the negotiations the Turkish representative bluntly told the Austrian, "My master has many 'Sandjak-begs' who are more powerful and richer in lands and in men than your Ferdinand."

Extraordinary Privileges Granted the French. The "Capitulations"

This alliance with France brought to Solyman little real gain. The Valois Kings of his day were light caliber, unstable monarchs who would not join with him in a consistent well-planned attack upon the Hapsburgs. Through all this period we are constrained to feel that Ottoman policy was more intelligent, its armies more scientifically organized and led, its standards of diplomatic and international morality higher than those of the Christian powers, allied or hostile, with which the Sultan had dealings.

The gains of France from this strange intercourse were, however, much greater. Not merely did the fear of Solyman prevent Charles V from exploiting the great advantages which he repeatedly won over the Valois, but the Sultan was glad to encourage French commerce in the Mediterranean as a foil to that of Venice, Genoa, and Spain. In 1535 a solemn *hatti-cherif* bestowed on the French in the Levant extraordinary privileges. They were given the right to navigate in Turkish waters and to trade freely against a very small customs duty. They also were allowed to have resident consuls with very complete jurisdiction over their own country, likewise the "guardianship" of the Holy Places at Jerusalem, and a kind of protectorate over all Catholic Christians in the Ottoman lands; in short, privileges and concessions such as no other Europeans enjoyed, and which became a precedent for all subsequent demands by other governments upon the Sultans. Englishmen, Sicilians, Genoese, etc., who wished to traffic in the Ottoman dominions were compelled for long to do so under the ægis of the French flag—a privilege for which they had of course to pay roundly. Finally the King of France alone was treated by the Sultan as a social equal. All other Western potentates were mere "begs" ("lords") in Turkish documents, but Francis I and his successors were styled officially "Padishahs" (Emperors)—and such matters counted for very much in the East.[4]

[4] England made her first commercial treaty with the sultans in 1579, when the latter had come to realize the undesirability of allowing the French to monopolize the Western trade. The English were given nearly the same extra-territorial rights and privileges as the French. The Dutch also won such concessions about a generation later.

In 1583 Elizabeth (through her first ambassador, William Harebone) made a curious attempt to enlist Turkish aid against the Spanish "Idolaters who falsely profess the name of Christ": and the English envoys discanted so vigorously on the slightness of the difference betwixt Protestantism and Islam that a Turkish minister asserted: "The English, in order to become genuine Moslems, need only to lift the finger and recite the 'Confession' of faith in Allah and the Prophet."

Solyman's first treaty with Austria did not endure. Repeatedly the Turkish irregular cavalry harried the Austrian lands with hideous thoroughness, sweeping the country bare, and carrying away to Constantinople tens of thousands of miserable captives, most of whom ended their days in harems or some worse form of slavery. Finally in 1562 a more permanent peace was made, Ferdinand promising a regular annual tribute of 30,000 ducats. Thus ended a contest that seemed to be slowly blotting out civilized life all along the Danube. "I know that my old master has need of rest," said the Turkish negotiator, after signing the treaty, "but no less does your Emperor. . . . Take care not to call the sleeping lion back to the battle!"

Repulse of the Turks at Malta (1565). Solyman Dies in Hungary (1566)

Solyman, however, was seeking peace with the Hapsburgs, largely in order to get a free hand for a great maritime enterprise. The Knights of St. John, ousted from Rhodes, had been given the strategically located island of Malta by Charles V. Speedily their galleys were again ranging the Moslem end of the Mediterranean and avenging the devastations of the Corsairs. To remove this new scourge of Islam, in 1565 Solyman sent forth an armament of 191 ships and 30,000 men under Mustafa Pasha and the distinguished Corsair admiral, Dragut.

Had the expedition prospered, the Ottomans would now have obtained a coign of vantage towards the western Mediterranean, and their next logical move would have been an attack on Sicily. But Malta did not go the way of Rhodes. The Knights made an eternally memorable defense. From May till September the Turks remained on the island, dashing themselves upon the chief town, Valetta. After reckless sacrifices they at last took St. Elmo, one of the harbor forts, but as Mustafa cried out bitterly: "If the child has cost us so dear, what will be the purchase of the father!" Dragut the admiral was presently slain. Nevertheless the Turks pressed hard, until Valetta was almost at last gasp: but fortunately the Knights could receive reënforcements at Malta as they could not get them at Rhodes. The Spanish Viceroy of Sicily made a landing on the island with a relieving force, and the Turks, utterly

discouraged, made haste to raise the siege. It had cost their master a considerable part of his naval power.

This failure at Malta embittered Solyman's declining days. All his glory, also, had not secured to him joy within his family. His chief Sultana, a clever Russian woman, Roxelana,[5] had inveigled him into putting to death his very capable grand vizier, Ibrahim[6] (1536), then in 1553 his own worthy and magnanimous son (by another consort), Prince Mustafa. Still another son, Bayezid, revolted against his father and had to be executed (1561). Solyman doubtless knew that his surviving son by Roxelana was an abominable sensualist, a disgrace to his line. But the white-haired Sultan was resolved to die in "the Way of Allah" as became a Padishah. In 1566 he led in person an expedition against the Hungarian stronghold of Sziget, which earlier had defied him. Before the city fell he died in the camp, to the last urging on the attack. The vizier concealed his death from the army lest it become seditious or discouraged, until word could be sent to Constantinople and Selim II be properly proclaimed. Then suddenly in the stillness of the night, around the imperial tent arose the cry of the muezzins, *"Allah alone is great!"*—And the army knew that its great Sultan was no more.

Selim II "the Sot" (1566-1574 A. D.). Conquest of Cyprus (1570-1571 A. D.)

Roxelana's son, Selim II (1566-1574), was duly "girded with the sword of Osman,"[7] but no such ceremony could change his abominable character. He was too sodden in unspeakable vices often to play the bloody tyrant. *"Selim the Sot"* he has been written down in history. Most of his life was spent with his evil familiars within the great Seraglio palace. Nevertheless the Ottoman state did not display immediate degeneracy. The capable officials of Solyman

[5] This slave girl, the daughter of a village priest ("pope") in Red Russia, gained an influence over Solyman such as almost no other woman exercised during the prosperous period of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan actually married her as if she were a genuine Empress and not a mere slave consort.

[6] Ibrahim was invited to the palace to enjoy the unusual honor (in view of Mohammed II's law) of "dining with the Sultan." What followed is not precisely known. Messengers sent for him found his body in the morning. He had evidently struggled hard and splashes of his blood remained on the palace walls "a hundred years," a grim reminder of the perils along the paths of imperial favorites.

Solyman executed many other high dignitaries whom he for long had honored; nevertheless, compared with other Sultans, he passed for a just, gracious and merciful master.

[7] The equivalent of coronation for the Ottoman sultans.

survived their old master, and Selim retained wits enough to keep in office and usually to trust an exceedingly competent grand vizier, Mohammed Sokolli.

This new reign was marked by an attempt of the Turks to penetrate across South Russia to the Volga and the Caspian—an undertaking which failed largely because the Moslem Tartars of the region did not themselves care to have such formidable "protectors" as the Turks too near at hand. The great event of Selim II's years of power was, however, the Conquest of Cyprus. Venice had held the island since the passing of the last Kings of Jerusalem (1488). The Ottomans now deliberately picked a quarrel with the Republic, and before the latter could mobilize, they threw overwhelming forces into Cyprus which speedily mastered the island (1570-1571): —a victory that was stained by the extreme cruelty of the conquerors and by the foul treachery with which they violated the terms of the surrender of Famagausta, the chief Venetian stronghold.[8]

Battle of Lepanto (1571 A. D.). First Great Ottoman Reverse

Cyprus was not recovered, but the massacred Venetian garrisons were to be avenged. For once most of the other Mediterranean Christian powers came to the aid of Venice. Philip II of Spain assembled a huge armada. Venice of course did her best. The Pope and the lesser Italian states assisted. Don Juan of Austria (the illegitimate brother of the King of Spain) furnished a showy and gallant high admiral. After delays so great that the fate of Cyprus was settled, the Christian galleys mustered leisurely at Messina and then moved to the coast of Greece. Near old Ithaca a brigantine brought news to the fleet that Famagausta had fallen and that it was useless to proceed to Cyprus, but three days later Don Juan discovered the assembled navy of the Ottomans waiting him in the Gulf of Lepanto and he was never a man to decline a battle.

The Turkish admirals were a little less confident. They had indeed 208 galleys of full power and 66 smaller vessels, but part of the crews were of uncertain stuff. There were 2500 competent

[8] Bragadino the Venetian commander capitulated on condition that he and his men should be honorably transported to Crete. After yielding he was seized and flayed alive. This crime stands out in its perfidy, even in the much smirched annals of the sixteenth century.

Janissaries on board, but the rest, some 22,000 men, contained many "Spahis" hastily levied in Greece, feudal cavalrymen in fact, brave perhaps, but utterly untrained in sea warfare. The older Moslem commanders bespoke "caution," but Muezzin-Zadeh Ali, the Capitan-Pasha, was young and ardent as was his second, Hassan Pasha. They overruled their elders and gave orders forthwith to meet the Christians (October 7, 1571). Don Juan commanded 203 regular oar-galleys, and these were powerfully supplemented by six great "galeasses," war craft of the most formidable type, built as "enormous floating citadels," so stoutly timbered that they could turn most of the artillery shot of the period, but themselves heavily armed, and each carrying 500 well trained soldiers. Don Juan also placed on board the Venetian galleys (a large fraction of the whole fleet) strong detachments of excellent Spanish infantry. Furthermore the Christians in general went into action with heavier armor than the Turks and better provided with muskets, instead of bows and arrows. However, except for the presence of gunpowder, these two enormous fleets were not so very unlike those other fleets of triremes which crashed together at Salamis.[9] The motive power of course came from galley slaves, Christians driving Moslem ships against Christians, Moslems driving Christian ships against Moslems: all toiling under the lash in a hideous manner that was hardly in evidence when Themistocles bade his free Athenians bend to the oar against Xerxes.

Under such circumstances there was little chance for skillful seamanship. Ship laid itself beside ship, and the whole battle resolved itself into a series of desperate boarding encounters and cutlass butcheries, wherein the Christians and especially the Spaniards soon had a very marked advantage. The Moslems prevailed somewhat in their left wing, but in their center and right the defeat was overwhelming. The flagships of Ali and Don Juan set the example to the others by locking each other in mortal combat, until the superior arquebuse fire of the Spaniards cleared the Turkish decks and the Moslem flagship was taken. The too headlong Capitan-Pasha disappeared in the slaughter. At last, seeing the fight continually turning against them, many of the unsteady Turkish crews flung themselves into the water and escaped to the not distant

[9] The main difference of course was that in the ancient vessels, each rower pulled a separate oar; in the mediæval galleys the oars were so large four or five men were required to *push* each of them.

shores. Here and there a small quadron of Ottomans broke through and escaped, but this gave small consolation at Stamboul for an overwhelming defeat. The Christians indeed had lost 12 galleys and 7500 men slain or wounded: but their foes had to mourn over 192 vessels sunk or taken, and well over 20,000 men killed outright, including ten begs or pashas, as well as the Capitan-Pasha: while to fill up Don Juan's cup of joy over 12,000 Christian rowers were delivered from Infidel slavery.

Trifling Results of the Victory. Venice Makes Peace (1573 A. D.)

So ended the battle of Lepanto. At Rome, Venice and Madrid there were extraordinary rejoicings and solemn Te Deums. Don Juan became the hero of Catholic Christendom. Then the entire Christian armada disbanded after such acrimonious wrangling among its chiefs that, "Only by a miracle (as wrote the Venetian admiral) was it possible for us to fight such a battle, and just as great was the miracle that the prevailing greed and covetousness [over the booty] have not flung us upon one another in a second battle." While the Turks still trembled for the safety of Stamboul and made frantic efforts to build a new fleet, Venice decided that it was useless to prolong the war in futile hopes of getting further effective help from Spain, and negotiated directly with Sokolli. The shrewd old grand vizier soon comprehended that the golden moment for the Christians to use their victory had slipped by. He stated the case bluntly to the Venetian envoy: "You have shaved our chin: again our beard is growing. We have lopped off your arm [in Cyprus]: you can never replace it." To save her commerce from utter ruin and to stop the expense of the war Venice not merely ceded Cyprus to the Sultan, but actually paid an indemnity of 300,000 ducats (1573). "To read the clauses of the treaty, who would have believed that Venice had been victorious at Lepanto?" Never had there been so complete a victory or one with such an astonishing anticlimax! Yet the lesson of Lepanto coming so soon after the Turkish defeat at Malta was not lost upon the world. The Ottoman naval power never entirely recovered from this great catastrophe, and the Sultans could no longer claim a constant suc-

cession of triumphs. With good hope their Christian foes could resist them.[10]

Selim the Sot died by slipping upon a marble floor while unsteady with liquor (1574). Some of his successors were slightly worthier men, but the days of great Solyman were now a retreating memory. The long, weary twilight of decadence had begun for the vast Ottoman Empire.

[10] Lepanto deserves mention as the last great naval battle fought mainly with row galleys. In Mediterranean waters these swift but unseaworthy craft driven by packs of human cattle, long retained considerable utility. The next great naval battle—the Defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588)—was won to a large extent because the English sea-dogs had learned the possibilities of *sail* tactics in the open ocean, as their foes had never done. Despite their many voyages to the Indies the Spanish admirals could not get away from the traditions of naval warfare formed in landlocked southern waters very different from the tumbling British Channel and North Sea.

CHAPTER XXI

THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE[1]
I. THE SULTANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT THROUGH "SLAVES"

The Ottoman Empire a Military Despotism

Ottoman institutions, such as existed in those palmy days before a thin veneer of Occidentalism spread itself over them, reached their highest development with Solyman the Magnificent. Properly did his native admirers call him "the Lawgiver." Mohammed II had already done much to place the polity of the Empire upon a firm basis. Solyman completed the fabric. Subsequent sultans were to add very little until the days of those half-hearted reforms by which a few Europeanized Turks strove to avert the evil destiny of the Ottoman dominion.

The nature of the state ruled by the Sultans can best be understood by stating that from first to last in its real essence it was *a strictly military monarchy*. Even after the conquest of Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia, with their great Moslem populations, probably more than half the subjects of the Padishah always preferred the church to the mosque, and covertly prayed for the day of deliverance from the "Infidel." The Turks also were anything but certain of the loyalty of the Arabianized Moslems of Syria and Egypt, and still less of the heretical Shiah elements in the Tigro-Euphrates valley. Even as Sparta remained forever a military state through need of constant guarding against an uprising of her helots, so the sons of Ertoghrul had to remain with arms in their grasp, lest at any moment the oppressed majority arise and rend

[1] *Acknowledgment.* For the material in this chapter and the next, besides many other monographs the author is somewhat indebted to the discussions in the old but not superseded histories of the Turks by Von Hammer and his English disciple and redactor Creasy, still more decidedly to Rambaud ("Histoire Generale," IV, pp. 747-776), and to an even greater extent the learned and enlightening monograph by Professor A. H. Lybyer, "The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent."

them.[2] Condemned thus by circumstances forever to be military, so long as the Ottoman state was strong it could use its surplus armaments to spread terror among its neighbors. After it became weaker, for long it was still powerful enough to hold down the disarmed and systematically enfeebled non-Ottoman populations.

The Empire Could Not Be Consolidated

With such an end in view, it must be said that an enormous amount of human cunning went into the devising of Turkish institutions. The lawgivers of other lands and epochs would have set as their goal the assimilating of the heterogeneous races under the Sultans into a single nationality with a single type of civilization. Such a task, however, if undertaken, would have ruined the Ottoman Empire. At the dawn of the twentieth century there were at least twenty-one distinct races in the then curtailed dominions of the Padishah. Under Solyman there were probably at least thirty. Even if a sultan had discarded the distinct command of the Prophet to grant tolerance and had endeavored by ruthless fiat to compel all Christians and Jews to become Moslem, there would still have remained an enormous racial diversity. Albanians, Kurds, Arabs and Circassians hated the Turks and their "Ottomanizing" even when they all called upon a single Allah. If Greeks, Armenians, Christians, Syrians, and the numerous Jews had become Moslem they would have ceased to be subject to many forms of taxation, and their conversion would have produced a crisis in the treasury. The very nature of the case required that the Moslems (especially the Turks) should remain as a kind of military aristocracy, with most of the economic life of the Empire in the hands of the exploited classes. To let his Christian subjects keep their religion, and yet stand on a political equality with the True Believers was of course beyond the power of the most tolerant Sultans.

As developed under Solyman the government of the Levant was

[2] In 1910, after great regions that were predominantly Christian had been torn away, the Turkish Empire was estimated to be barely 50 per cent Moslem; the remainder comprised 47 per cent of Christians, with about 3 per cent of Jews, Druses, etc. Two thirds of the population of the European provinces which then remained were Christians.

The total population of the Empire in 1910 was around 36,000,000. Of these only about 10,000,000 were genuine "Turks." There were about 7,000,000 Moslem Semites (Arabs and Syrians).

While Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece proper, etc., pertained to the Sultans, the proportion of Christians and non-Turks was of course far greater.

practically vested in two great "composite institutions," which divided between them most of the functions possible for a Moslem despotism. These have been called the "Ruling Institution" and the "Moslem Institution."

The "Ruling Institution" and the "Moslem Institution"

I. "The '*Ruling Institution*' included the sultan, his officers, the standing army, and a large body of young men who were being educated for public service. These persons wielded the sword, the pen and the scepter. They conducted the whole of the government except the administration of justice in matters controlled by the Sacred Law, and of those limited matters left to groups of non-Moslems. The most vital feature of this institution was this,—that with few exceptions, its personnel consisted of *men born of Christian parents,* or of the sons of such men; and second, that almost every member of the Ruling Institution came into it as *the Sultan's slave* (*kul*), and remained such for life to whatever lofty dignity he might attain.

II. "The '*Moslem Institution*' included the educators, ministers of religion and judges, and all in training for such duties, besides certain dervishes [Islamic monks], and the descendants of the Prophet. The members of this group maintained the whole substance and structure of Moslem learning, religion and law. In direct contrast to the Ruling Institution, the personnel of the Moslem Institution, almost without exception, *consisted of men of Moslem parents,* and born and brought up free." [3]

Other governments have indeed used "slaves" as a means of recruiting their guard-corps or their civil bureaus, but never to the astonishing extent of the Ottomans. Wrote a well-informed Venetian [Barbaro] about 1570: "It is a fact, truly worthy of much consideration, that the riches, the forces, the government, and in short *the whole state* of the Ottoman Empire is founded upon and placed in the hands of persons all born in the faith of Christ, who by different methods were made slaves and transferred into the Mohammedan sect. Then [whoever studies the subject] will come more easily to an understanding of the government and nature of the Turks."

[3] Condensed and adapted from Lybyer, pp. 36-37.

Indeed it may be said that so long as military ruthlessness and applied despotism were able to keep up this supply of ex-Christian Indo-European helpers for the Sultan's service, the Ottoman government continued relatively efficient. When this supply was cut off, and the Sultan's officials had to be drawn mostly from the elements that were basically Turanian or at least Semitic, the degeneracy of the whole régime was hastened. To no slight extent under the great Sultans was imperious Asia forcing the men of the West to rivet their own fetters and to provide their own taskmasters.

With such fundamental propositions in view, a statement may be made of the working government of the sixteenth century, and of how this government reacted upon the non-privileged Christian majority.

The Despot,—Sultan, Padishah, Kalif, etc.

The center of power was, of course, the despot,[4] ordinarily known since the days of Bayezid I as the "Sultan." As the head of the original Turkish horde he was still sometimes called *Khan*. After becoming master of Constantinople and "Lord of the Two Continents and the Two Seas" he vaunted himself as *Padishah* (Persian "King of Kings"=Emperor). After the conquests of Selim the Grim he also took the sacrosanct title of *Kalif* (see p. 219) with claims to at least the spiritual supremacy over all orthodox Moslems (Sonnites) far outside of his direct dominions. Greek Christian writers even obsequiously sometimes called him *Basileus*, as if he were the proper heir to the Palaiologoi, and in truth Mohammed II took pains to assume not a little of the pomp, ceremonial and even the court titles and institutions of the vanished Greek Empire. In place of the "Sacred Palace" there was now the "Sublime Porte." The Sultan, like his Christian predecessor, was "Master of the Universe."[5] All the subjects alike of a Byzantine or an Ottoman monarch were in theory his "slaves." Many great court officers of the Greeks, e. g., the

[4] The East, until recently at least, has made no success with any government except despotism. But there can be many types of despotisms; in Egypt the sacerdotal element predominated in the monarchy, in China the patriarchal, in Assyria and Turkey the military. Assyria borrowed about all that was good in its civilization from more pacific Babylonia; as did the Ottomans from the Saracens, Persians and Greeks.

[5] Many other titles for the sultans were of course current in unofficial discourse. Colloquially among his subjects, the monarch was often called *"The Son of the Slave"* in pointed reference to the fact that he was almost invariably born of a slave mother. In Persia, where of course the Ottoman rulers enjoyed little love, and sometimes indeed in Constantinople, he was often grimly styled *"The Man Killer"* ("Hunkiar"), in view of his arbitrary and not unused powers of life and death.

"Grand Domestic" and the "Grand Logothete," found their precise counterparts in the "Grand Vizier" and the "Reïs-Effendi" who came after them. In place of the Byzantine "Themes" there are Ottoman "Sanjaks." In place of the military fiefs of the "Stratiotai" there are the fiefs of the "Spahis." The analogies could be carried much further.

The Sultan's Slaves. A Government by ex-Christians

Already comment has been made upon the deliberate use of slaves in every branch of the civil and military government to the practical exclusion of free born Ottomans. Many of these slaves had been swept from their homes in infancy by that systematic blood tax, whereof the recruitment of the Janissaries was only one feature. In the schools of "pages" around the imperial palace were hundreds of keen-witted, strong-limbed boys,—Greek, Slavs, Albanians and even Italian and French prisoners (victims of Corsair kidnapping) who had been carefully selected for their duties by shrewd judges of human flesh, and who had been taken at so early an age that their conversion to Islam was easy and inevitable.

The Sultans had such a preference for using and promoting ex-Christians, that apostasy, "turning Turk," was an irresistible temptation to many of the conquered race. A certain Manuel Palaiologos, the last of the old imperial line, thus renounced his nation and creed, and ended his life as an Ottoman beg. Under Solyman nearly all the Grand and ordinary Viziers had been born Christian. At one time his fleet was under a high admiral who had been a Greek of Asia Minor (Dragut), assisted by a Croatian (Piale), by an Albanian (Sinan), and by the "Brothers Barbarossa," who were Lesbian. The remarkable Grand Vizier, Mohammed Sokolli, who really governed the Empire under Selim the Sot, was a Bosniak. A famous leader under Bayezid II, Hersek-Ahmed, who became the Sultan's son-in-law, had been born as a Venetian patrician. Doubtless the old-line Ottomans, native devotees of Islam, grumbled in their beards at this practical disfranchisement, but they were in absolute helplessness. *"I have been to a slave market!"* once testily declared a Grand Vizier who chanced to be Ottoman born, after a session of the imperial [6] divan, at which he had met with all his official colleagues.

[6] It is reckoned that of 48 grand viziers during the prosperous period of Ottoman Empire, only 12 were the sons of Moslems.

Concerning the very practical and efficient education given these slave boys as "pages" around the Sultan's palace, there is no space here to speak.[7] Wrote a sixteenth-century Christian who knew the Near East well: "The Turks rejoice greatly when they find an exceptional man, as though they had acquired a precious object, and they spare no labor or effort in cultivating him, especially if they discern that he is fit for war." [Busbecq.] From the moment he entered the Sultan's service the young page was made to understand that it was quite in his power by faithfulness, intelligence and courage to raise himself to the Grand Vizierate; while the least display of the reverse qualities might bring not merely disgrace but the executioner. Such a stimulus to well-doing, coupled with a discipline rigid indeed but not unduly harsh, was bound to provide the Padishahs with invaluable public servants.

Great Officials of the Empire

Ottoman writers described the Sultan's government as a "tent with four posts." Three of these four supports of the Empire were supplied by the secular "Ruling Institution" of promoted slaves; the fourth by the "Moslem Institution" of true sons of Islam.

I. The Grand Vizier, assisted in Solyman's day by four ordinary viziers, was the "burden-bearer" of the monarchy. His power covered practically all field of administration not specifically reserved for other officials. The Grand Vizier might at any instant be strangled by the dreaded mutes, ever at the beck of their imperial master, but so long as the minister held office there was little that he could not do. He even could execute high personages, usually without any appeal to the sovran. Frequently he was *"Seraskier"*—supreme chief of the army. Again he has actually been likened to a kind of "Vice-Emperor." A really efficient minister like Sokolli was thus able for a while to counterbalance the abominable characters of such sultans as Selim II.

II. The *defterdars* (ultimately four) were the ministers of finance. Since a monarch like Solyman enjoyed an income "that seems to have approached 10,000,000 ducats"[8] [Bury] the fiscal

[7] Lybyer, p. 73 ff. About 1200 to 1500 of the choicest boys selected annually were brought up directly in the various palaces of the Sultan. Many more of these young "slaves" were placed in the establishments of the great officers. The whole process of selecting the cleverest and most promising for prompt and steady promotion was astonishingly skillful.

[8] Lybyer (p. 181) considers the maximum only 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 ducats. A ducat was something over $2.00. Even this smaller figure made Solyman (in the latter part of his reign) far richer than any monarch of Christendom, including Charles V.

administration, even with much leakage and the inevitable embezzlements of the Orient, was no slight task for a great bureau under the control of these dignitaries.

III. The *nischandjis* were secretaries of state with somewhat assorted functions. At their head there came to be presently the *reïs-effendi* (Secretary General), who at length developed into the minister for foreign affairs, subject of course to the Grand Vizier. The *nischandjis* were members of the *divan* (the high council of the Empire) and they constituted together a kind of chancellery office, handling the innumerable decrees and protocols in which Eastern no less than Western bureaucrats have ever delighted.

The Judges and Religious Officials. The Grand Mufti

The "Moslem Institution" in this group of higher ministers was represented by "military judges" (*kaziaskers*) of "Roumelia" (for Europe) and of "Anatolia" (for Asia). They were originally merely the justiciars for the Moslems of the army, but presently they came to exercise pretty complete control over the entire judicial system of the Empire including the appointment of the subordinate judges (*cadis,* etc.). Higher than they, however, uplifted himself the *Grand Mufti* of Constantinople, later better known as the *Sheik-ul-Islam* ("Ancient of Islam"), often promoted from the rank of *kaziasker.* The Grand Mufti represented the great class of the ulemas (lawyer-theologians) throughout the Empire. He ordinarily constituted the highest judge of appeal in all civil and religious cases. The Sultan could appoint, remove and even execute him, but was bound to treat with respect his interpretations of the sacred law (*Cheriate*). An able and high-minded Grand Mufti could accomplish much, and even Selim I, in his sanguinary moods, would listen to this official's remonstrances, while his *fetvahs* (solemn decisions) constituted the highest possible interpretation of law. To become Grand Mufti was the highest lawful ambition for most youths born as Ottomans.

The Subordinate Officials. The Harem and its Influence

Under these various "pillars of the tent of the Padishah," there gathered inevitably a swarm of other dignitaries—the *agas* ("elders")

commanding the different corps of the army, especially the aga of the Janissaries,—the other civil agas in charge of the peaceful offices of the palace, the mighty *Kizlar-agasi* ("Custodian of the Girls") the chief of the black eunuchs with such remarkable opportunities for insidiously influencing royalty, and all the inferior menials of the palace, such as the 2500 *bostanjis* who cared for the royal gardens and barges, and the 800 *kapidji,* the door-keepers of the "Sublime Porte," etc. An important personage always was the *khodja,* the tutor of the Sultan, who was usually empowered to give his one-time pupil wholesome and even unwelcome advice. As for the *ulemas,* the term covered many who seldom or never dared set foot within the palace. Some of these were the imams, the actual preachers in the mosques, and the *muezzins* who called the faithful to prayers. Others, however, might be professors in the universities, jurisconsults of great authority, cadis, and higher judges, with the Grand Mufti at their apex. Such were the principal elements (outside the harem) which assisted the "Lord of the Age, the Shadow of Allah," to govern the Near East.

This mass of officials, inevitably exercising an enormous influence upon the state, of course made the Sultan's personal authority subject to enormous limitations. It was indeed a perilous thing to be born of the blood of Osman. An Ottoman prince had usually to spend his father's lifetime in desperate intrigues to secure the succession for himself. Mohammed II deliberately laid down a law which put a premium on every kind of evil venture; "Those of my illustrious children and grandchildren who ascend the throne may execute their brothers, in order to assure the peace of the world." [9] There was, however, no strict law of primogeniture assuring the throne to one particular son. Even if a ruler designated a certain son as his heir, that only became a reason for incessant conspiracies against him. The case of Roxelana and how she procured the destruction of Prince Mustafa (see p. 229) that her own son might rule, was merely the most notable of these instances. Thanks to the harem system and polygamy, the chief of the black eunuchs, the *Sultana-valide* (Empress Mother) and one or more of the *Sultana-khassaki* (consorts) might bend the Padishah to their whims and thwart the wisest counsels of the responsible viziers. This was

[9] Daughters of a Sultan might be married to high officials, but if they bore sons the latter were not allowed to live. The sons of their daughters were indeed suffered to live, but could not hold great state offices.

hideously true even under Solyman. It became still more the case under his successors.[10]

[10] Very many of these women who exercised surpassing influence in the Palace were of non-Moslem antecedents. Moslem girls could not ordinarily be sold or kidnaped into slavery. Roxelana was of course a Russian. Murad III (1574-1595) was in the clutches of his Venetian consort Safiye, who often used her power to promote the interests of her native Venice. Circassians, Greek Armenians, Slavs, etc., have all done their share to dilute the "blood of Osman." To-day the actual amount of Turanian blood in the veins of a sultan is estimated at "one drop in a million"; but of course the proportion in the ordinary Ottoman's is vastly greater.

CHAPTER XXII

THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE. II. THE ARMY; THE JANISSARIES; THE CHRISTIAN RAYAHS

The Organization of the Ottoman Armies

Afar from the *divan* of the viziers and secretaries, and from the *harem* of the eunuchs and pampered slave women spread the wide *sanjaks* of the Empire. These provinces were ruled by *begs* under the supervision of certain higher officers known as *beglierbegs*. The general title of *pasha* was granted as a kind of special honor to the *beglierbegs,* to the more important begs and to certain high officials like the *Capitan,* the High Admiral of the fleet.

Inevitably, as explained, the whole basis for imperial administration had to be military. The Turkish population had to be organized to supply the Padishah with fighters; the disarmed Christians to sustain the army with taxes and payments in kind.

The Ottoman armies were made up of the kinds of troops, which may be ranked in ascending order of efficiency as (I) The Irregulars; (II) The Feudal Levies; (III) The Standing Forces.

I. *The Irregulars* consisted of *akindji* (light cavalry) and light infantry. These forces were drawn from the Moslem population assembled in time of war only. Their main or only pay was booty and their discipline was notoriously lax. In battle they could be employed to eke out the better troops and to exhaust the enemy (as at Varna) before the crisis of the engagement. They were very numerous and were sometimes useful—but only as devouring hordes of barbarians.

II. The so-called *Feudal Levies,* often called "Feudal Spahis," were troops drawn from the "military fiefs." The sultans, as they made conquests, granted out new lands to reliable holders who paid for the grants with military service. The small fief of a *timar* had to send to the wars at least one horseman with two or three assistant footmen. A *zaim* had to furnish 19 or 20 horsemen; and so with

still larger estates. The government retained the right to recall these guards, but inevitably the tendency was for them to become hereditary. These feudal levies furnished excellent cavalry. The "Zaims" and "Timariotes" were "a class of country gentlemen, honest, sober, true to the Moslem faith and to the Sultan, better in morals than the *Kullar* (imperial slaves) if not so able in intellect." It was they who furnished the real backbone of many Ottoman armies, and who (when the supply of slaves and renegades declined) were at least able to supply that strength which long kept the Empire from dissolution.

III. Supplementing these large Feudal levies, there were *Regular forces*. There were several subsidiary divisions in these, but the most notable—barring always the Janissaries,—were the "Spahis of the Porte"—the imperial cavalry corps. This constituted a force of some 12,000 of magnificent horsemen, continually in service and trained in every sense to war. They shared with the Janissaries the honor of protecting the person of the Sultan in battle.

The Janissaries. Recruitment and Importance of the Corps

The oft-mentioned Janissaries (yeni-Tcheri="Young Soldiers") were traceable back to the days of Orchan I. The method of levying them served at once to supply the Padishahs with an incomparable guard corps and to weaken the Christian population in case of any dream of revolt.[1] Often has been told how every five years the Sultan's commissioners went among the helpless Christian villages (only Constantinople, Athens, Rhodes, and a few other spots were exempt) and selected by shrewd appraisement sufficient boys who would be alert and strong. These boys were henceforth practically dead to their agonized parents.[2] They were trained to become Moslems (usually of a fanatical type), and taught that their end all and be all was the military service of the Sultan. They were forbidden to marry, or to engage in any peaceful trade or profession. In return, they enjoyed great privileges. They could only be punished by their own officers, and even the Grand Viziers had slight control over them.

[1] Doubtless the desire to secure new recruits for Islam was another motive—but not, I think, a very dominant one.

[2] It is alleged that Christian parents sometimes offered their children willingly, in view of the great worldly hopes open to Janissaries. It may be doubted, however, whether this was very often the case. Some Janissaries indeed retained a certain sympathy with the faith of their parents, and more frequently they violated the mandate of Islam against the use of wine, and were generally lax in all their morality.

This formidable corps amounted in Solyman's day to about 12,000 to 14,000, whereof about half were barracked regularly at Constantinople. There were many peculiarities about their organization. All these "slaves" partook of the Sultan's "soup," to remind them of which fact they wore a kind of spoon thrust into their white felt caps in lieu of a plume. Their colonels rejoiced in the titles of "first soup-makers"; the lieutenant colonels as "first cooks," and after them came the "first water-carriers"; while a huge metallic soup boiler was carried as a kind of standard and kettle drum in each division to use as a rallying point. To "lose one's soup boilers in battle" was the greatest disgrace that could befall a company (*orta*) of Janissaries, and in all their numerous revolts against the government the first measure of defiance always was "to overturn the soup boilers," thereby announcing that they would eat the Sultan's soup no more until they had had their desires.

The fighting efficiency of this guard corps was out of all proportion to its numbers, even in an age when all Western powers depended on small professional armies. The Janissaries, picked men trained to a perfect teamwork, could be depended upon for a charge at the critical moment which decided many a battle.

Moslems Excluded from the Janissaries. They Become Dangerous to the Sultan

The exclusion of the native Moslems from a corps of warriors of such fame and imperial favor awakened inevitably murmuring and jealousy among the faithful, but the great conquering Sultans refused angrily to enroll the born-sons of Islam. A Moslem merchant once offered Selim the Grim to remit a debt of 60,000 gold florins owed him by the government, if only his son could be enrolled as a Janissary. The despot flew into a rage, "By the souls of my great ancestors, I would smite off his head, save as people might say that I slew him to seize his money. . . . Pay that man his gold, and let me hear no more of such villainies. He who shall [suggest the like again] shall pass to the next world without time to repent his deed!" Nevertheless, despite this effort to reserve the guard-corps for men likely to be devoted to the ruler's service, the control of the Janissaries soon became a heavy problem for even

the strongest monarch. Mohammed II spoke of them as "wild-beasts." Their mutiny practically determined the deposition of Bayezid II and the proclamation of Selim I. At every new accession they shamelessly demanded a donation large enough to empty the treasury and, as will be seen after the death of Solyman, born-Moslems began to intrude into the corps, while discipline and fighting efficiency steadily degenerated. Much of the story of the decay of the Ottoman Empire revolves in fact around the mutinies and massacres by these Prætorians—terrible once to the foe, but presently becoming still more terrible to their nominal masters.

In his military establishment about 1565 Solyman had over 48,000 men "eating his bread," that is, permanently under pay. By calling out the feudatories and irregulars he could add to these over 200,000 more. No Christian prince of the sixteenth century could dream of mobilizing anything like 250,000, especially in rapidly moving field armies. The problems of camp sanitation and the commissariat seem also to have been much better handled by the Ottomans than by the rulers of the West, and the Turkish artillery for long was quite on a level with, if not superior to, the Christians. The Sultan's navy, supplied with admirable sailors and captains from the headlands and islands of the Ægean, was almost a match for the naval power of Venice and Spain combined. From a military standpoint it is therefore fair to say that Solyman apparently wielded a greater war power than even his mighty contemporaries, Charles V or Philip II. The valor of the Venetians and Austrians who prevented the Turkish penetration of Europe, is not therefore to be despised.[3]

Learning and Architecture in the Ottoman Lands

Less can be said in praise of Ottoman civilization even at its apogee. Such Sultans as Solyman did indeed, in a genuine sense,

[3] The terrific power and the magnificent discipline of the Turkish armies in the age of Solyman is reflected in the writings of many Western visitors to the Levant. Thus Busbecq wrote of a review which he was permitted to witness: "I saw assembled on the plain [near Scutari] a mighty multitude of turbaned heads attentively following in the most profound silence, the words of the priest who was leading their devotions. They kept their ranks, each in his proper position; the lines of troops looked like so many hedges or walls parting out the wide plain. According to its rank or service each corps was posted nearer to or farther from the place where stood the sultan. The troops were dressed in brilliant uniforms, their head-dresses rivaling snow in whiteness. . . . The men were so motionless that they seemed rooted to the ground. When the priest pronounced the name of Mohammed all alike bowed their heads to their knees simultaneously, and when he uttered the name of God they fell on their faces in worship and kissed the ground. . . . When prayers were finished, the serried ranks broke up and the whole plain was gradually covered with their surging masses."

honor learning and even the fine arts. Mohammed II and his successors established a regular system of "colleges" (*medrasses*) in which the "ten branches of knowledge" were pursued with industry, and young Moslems trained to become imans (inferior teachers) and then mouderrés (professors in the colleges). There were Turkish poets of genuine grace and beauty, even if their thoughts were not profound and their subjects were limited. Histories likewise sometimes rose above the level of jejune chronicles or pious rhapsodies over the defeat of the Misbelievers. The only sciences, however, in which the Ottomans took any real interest were geography and mathematics. Here they added nothing to what the Arabs had done before them, not to mention the progress of their own contemporaries in the West.

The conquering Sultans rejoiced to build stately mosques, elegant palaces and other secular structures, but their architecture was even as their poetry and their science—borrowed from the Saracens, the Persians, or, in this case, more especially from the Byzantines. Some of these imitations of the older architecture were indeed very fine. In 1556 was completed the "Mosque of Solyman" that almost surpassed Hagia Sophia in the boldness of its dome and the beauty of its columns. Even here non-Ottoman genius was undoubtedly acting at the behest of the Padishah. The minarets indeed lent an Islamic touch to the one-time Greek churches. As they rose in clusters of two or four around the mosques of Constantinople, they transformed not ineffectively the distant panorama of the city. But they were a slight enough contribution by the Ottoman to the world of beauty from which he borrowed much and in which he destroyed much more. Little was his success in those things which pertained not to the sword.

The State of the Non-Moslem Subjects, the "Rayahs"

It remains to consider the lot of that great mass of conquered peoples, who constituted the majority of the Padishah's subjects. It has been explained that the Ottomans never were able and never really attempted to assimilate the Christian millions under their control or do anything really to change them from a congeries of tax-payers, "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Of course it should be clearly understood that all types of peasants and industrialists in the Middle Ages, under whatever government, had

always been accustomed to an oppression and exploitation that to-day would be unendurable. After certain vain struggles against them had failed, the Ottomans were not entirely unpopular as masters. "Despite the brutality of its deeds, and the severity of its exactions, the Turkish government was not the worst the Levant had known. It had the great merit of replacing the chaos of the thirteenth century, when there were more than twenty states in the Near East themselves often in anarchy; and the Turks gave a kind of unity and 'Roman peace' to the region, assuring communication between distant centers. They were not essentially persecutors in religion. At Rhodes the Greeks preferred their sway to that of the Knights of St. John; in Crete and the Morea to that of the Venetians; and the Serbs, Hungarians and Roumanians often preferred them to the Catholic Austrians." [Rambaud.]

Nevertheless the iron entered deep into the *Rayahs*—the non-Moslem subjects. Never were they allowed to forget their inferiority. True it was that the Turkish law contained the maxim: "The bended head is not to be stricken off"—but the head had ever to be bended. The Christians were forbidden to bear arms and theoretically at least to use horses. They were obliged to wear a costume distinguishing them from the ruling religion. They were subject to onerous and numerous imposts, as well as to the terrible blood-tax which made them provide their oppressor's civil administration and guard corps with their own flesh and blood. In very many regions—especially Bosnia and sometimes in Greece proper—the native aristocracy to save their lands at the time of the conquest turned Moslem. The peasantry, with less in this world to lose, clung tightly to the old faith. The new Moslems (or at least their descendants) speedily became fanatical for Islam and added the sins of bigotry to the ordinary sins of exploitation by a selfish landed aristocracy. Relations in many districts therefore became doubly embittered.

Taxes and Burdens of the Christians

Considering the great temporal advantages instantly awaiting most converts to Islam, in all ecclesiastical annals no large groups of persons were more truly confessors for their faith than the Balkan Christians all through the weary centuries of Ottoman domination. If they were not usually compelled to choose between death and Islam, their other sacrifices and humiliations were constant—with

no prospect of earthly deliverance. The status of the Christians indeed altered from century to century. It was decidedly better under the great conquering Sultans, who wished to render their new territories easy of control, than under the later rulers,—when the Ottomans felt themselves quite secure at home and their whole condition was degenerating. Then at last in the nineteenth century the Balkan Rayahs began to see visions of a reckoning with the old oppressor.

The actual taxes levied by the Ottoman government upon the Rayahs would probably not have been very excessive, if they had been honestly collected, without the always outrageous expedient of tax-farming, and without the inevitable "backsheesh" superposed by every financial intermediary, between the peasant and the Sultan.[4] As the government degenerated, this excessive cost of collection of taxes probably made the unhappy Christians pay out two aspers or more for every one that entered the treasury. However, even the relatively liberal "Kanun of the Rayahs" issued by Solyman embraces a startling list of imposts payable by Christian industrialists and peasants either to the state or to their "timars"—the Moslem landlords. There was the poll-tax and the tithe, the land tax and the tax on celibates, the tax on betrothals and the tax on sheep, the tax on pastures and the tax on mills—and so with many others, not counting the heart-rending tribute of boys. If a Moslem wished to engage in commerce he paid the government a customs duty of 2½ per cent; if a Christian he paid 5 per cent;—and so through many disabilities. Practically all imperial offices were of course closed to the Christians, save that of "Grand Dragoman" (High Interpreter) who had a really responsible post at the foreign office for dealing with Western ambassadors. The Christians, thus being excluded from the army and the civil service and with their native civilization hopelessly stunted, were thrown back upon only two resources—trade and agriculture.

Condition of the Greeks under Turkish Rule. Certain Favor Shown Them

Among the Rayahs there was not, however, an equality of oppression. The Greeks had suffered terribly by the conquest.

[4] The Chinese expression, "squeeze money," describes perfectly that wholesale and practically legalized form of plunder which goes on in every Oriental monarchy. The Ottomans, even in their palmy days, enjoyed more of this than their share.

Many of their leaders had perished, others fled to Italy, many were apostates. The really brilliant school of historians which recorded the last century of their dying Empire had no successors.[5] Only in the Venetian possessions,—Crete, Corfu, etc.,—did Greek remain something of a living literary language. But the Greeks, with their supple genius, soon made themselves almost indispensable to their conquerors. Their merchants were so incomparably superior to the Turks that they easily overcame the handicap of discriminatory customs duties. Their skill as sailors covered the Mediterranean with their ships—sailing of course under the Ottoman flag and under Ottoman protection. Their commerce in fact supplied so large a share of the entire imperial revenues, that the Turkish authorities were fain to show Greek merchants no little favor.[6]

As has been seen Mohammed II undertook to rehabilitate the Greek Church and made it a ready engine for his secular government. Not merely were the Greek clergymen favored as rulers of their own people. They were given authority over other branches of Christians. The Serbian and Bulgarian clergy for centuries were thus completely at the mercy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, usually a Greek of the "Phanar" district, who had perhaps bought his appointment and confirmation from the Infidel sultan by the most unblushing forms of "simony."[7]

State of the South Slavs, Bulgarians, Roumanians, etc.

The Greeks thus came to constitute a kind of preferred section of the Rayahs. The lot of the South Slavs (Serbs, Bosniaks, etc.), the Bulgarians, and such Albanians as remained Christian, was worse. They were peasants and could not lift themselves to commerce. Their landlords had mostly deserted their old faith. The peasants therefore lay at the mercy of the begs and cadis (the Moslem political chiefs and judges), the local "spahis," the great feudal landed proprietors, and last but not least of the Greek bishops,

[5] Phrantzes, Chalkokondyles, and Doukas give a record of the downfall of the Palaiologoi which for clearness, vividness, and human interest deserves to preserve a less melancholy event.

[6] Thus the mere fact that as Christians they paid 5 instead of 2½ per cent customs duties, often caused the authorities to encourage their trading activities, and to discourage the more lightly taxed Moslems from engaging in commerce.

[7] The Turks of course looked on the rivalries and coarse intrigues of factions of the "Phanariot" Greek clergy to secure the election for this or that candidate, as so many opportunities to levy on the Misbelievers. Sometimes by happy accident relatively worthy men were chosen.

sent down from Constantinople and possibly quite as oppressive as the begs. To Serb and Bulgar, therefore, even the poor consolation of controlling their beloved religion was denied them. They were thus reduced to the status of mere village communities, with no higher native dignitaries than their "village notables," and their parish "popes," with here and there a monastery which was not in the clutches of the Greeks. It is a testimony therefore to the sense of nationality which is rooted in mankind, that after nigh four centuries of this soul-destroying despotism, there should flame up again in the Balkans the fiercest nationalism perhaps known in the modern world.

North of the Danube lay Christian territories somewhat happier than those which were south thereof. In the reign of Solyman he had forced the complete submission of the princes of Wallachia (1524) and Moldavia (1546). These "Roumanians," however, were able to capitulate on terms. They did not lie on the direct road to Hungary, and their lands consequently were not ravaged (as were the Serbs') by the crossing and recrossing of pitiless armies. Their native aristocracy (*boyars*) kept their estates without apostasy. No mosques were built among them. No Turkish garrisons were ordinarily placed in their towns. They retained their own laws and administration, and, down to the eighteenth century, their native princes were able to keep their thrones upon "investiture" by the Sultans and against a moderate tribute and the supplying of a contingent for the Ottoman armies.

To the north of the Black Sea it has been explained how the Moslem Tartars of that region became the vassals of the great Padishah who could protect them from the already growing power of Russia. The Black Sea thus became entirely an Ottoman lake. There is no need to speak in detail of the arrangements which the sultans made for governing their conquests towards Persia, where Kurdistan was organized into eighteen cantons under hereditary native chiefs, or how the province of Siwas was erected into a kind of frontier march under a special *aga*.

Such then were some of the characteristics of the great military power which in the sixteenth century hung as a veritable sword of Damocles over Christian Europe. Fortunately, however, it seems an inevitable law that military monarchies, unless they can transform themselves into something quite otherwise, are bound suddenly

to come on some great barrier to their powers for mischief. This was entirely true of the Ottoman state. The success of a despotism can never be long divorced from the character of the despot. Solyman I was the last of an unusual number of remarkable rulers, while Selim II was the first of a line of sultans most of whom were to be more dangerous enemies to their Empire than Austria, Venice or Spain. After the century of conquest came the century of stagnation and decay—then the "Turkish peril" vanishes, and the outward disintegration of Solyman's mighty Empire begins.

NOTE ON MONTENEGRO

After the fatal battle of Kossova (1389; see p. 195), a Serbian "Prince of the Zeta" retired with a small band into the mountain pockets of Dalmatia, and in a very narrow stronghold defied the Turks. After 1479, when Venetian aid forsook them, these Slavs of the "Black Mountain" (*Tsernogora* = Montenegro) were entirely surrounded by Ottoman territories, but alone of all the South Slav peoples they never really bowed the knee to the alien. Montenegro was normally ruled by very militant prince-bishops, who (being unable to marry) transmitted their power in a kind of hereditary succession to their nephews. The Turks directed repeated expeditions against these most unchurchly "Vladikas," and several times (especially in 1714) penetrated the passes, seized Cettigne, the little capital, and imposed a tribute,—speedily to be repudiated; but every attempt at permanent conquest failed. Not, however, until well into the nineteenth century was the independence of Montenegro generally confirmed by the diplomatic settlements of Europe.

"O smallest among peoples, rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers."

[*Tennyson,* in 1877.]

NOTE ON CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE DAYS OF SOLYMAN I

A modern Italian writer, De Amicis, has presented a brilliant picture of Constantinople in the days of Ottoman prosperity.[8] The following is a condensed adaptation:—

"There were no bridges then over the Golden Horn, but from one shore to the other perpetually darted a myriad of splendid boats, many from the Seraglio with canopies fringed with silver and gold, and rowed by boatmen in silken habits.

[8] Edmondo de Amicis, "Constantinople," 1878.

The law which prescribed colors being still in force, the religions of the inhabitants could be known by the colors of their houses. Stamboul Proper was all yellow and red except the sacred and public edifices which were white as snow. The Armenian quarters were light gray: the Greek dark gray; the Hebrew purple. The passion for flowers was universal, and the gardens in and about the city showed great masses of hyacinths, tulips, and roses.

The enormous turban gave a colossal and magnificent aspect to the male population. Practically all the women went completely veiled, leaving nothing but the eyes visible, forming an anonymous and enigmatic population apart, and giving a gentle air of mystery to the entire city. A severe law determined the dress of all classes: each could be instantly identified by the form of turban or color of caftan. The streets were filled with horsemen and with long files of camels belonging to the army, giving often to the capital the grandly barbarous aspect of Asia. Gilded 'arabas' drawn by oxen crossed the green or red carriages of the officials, or the light 'telekas' with satin curtains and fantastically ornamented with panels.

Slaves of all countries from Poland to Ethiopia hurried by, rattling the very chains which had often been riveted upon them on the field of battle. Groups of soldiers filled the squares and courts of all the mosques, showing their wounds won before Belgrade, Vienna or Damascus. Hundreds of story-tellers with loud voice and vivid gesture recounted to delighted crowds the tales of the victories won by the Padishah's armies three months' march from Stamboul. Pressing through the humbler throngs frequently went the brilliant trains of the pashas, agas and begs, or of European ambassadors coming to crave peace or alliance. Again there passed the insolent Janissaries or Spahis, rattling their sabers stained with the blood of twenty people: while handsome Greek and Hungarian pages of the Seraglio, dressed like princes, moved haughtily amid the obsequious multitude.

Now down the street might gallop a troop of eunuchs, shouting and threatening, and the ways became deserted while windows were closed, for after the riders whirled the train of glittering carriages, containing the beauties of the Sultan's court, filling the air with perfumes and laughter.

In all the enormous body of Constantinople there boiled a feverish life. The treasury overflowed with jewels, the arsenal with arms, the barracks with soldiers, the caravansaries with travelers: the slave markets swarmed with fair women, dealers and great lords: learned men thronged the archive chambers of the mosques: long-winded officials prepared the interminable annals of the Empire: poets, pensioners of the Seraglio, sang at the baths of the imperial wars and loves: armies of Bulgarian and Armenian laborers toiled to build mosques with blocks of Egyptian granite or Parian marble: while in the port other workers made ready the fleet of three hundred sails that was to spread terror around the Christian Mediterranean.

At the great Mohammedan festivals, after the days of carnival rout and of luxurious feasting, by night Stamboul would glow with enormous illuminations;—five hundred mosques sparkling with lights, which formed over the

city an immense aureole of fire that announced to the shepherds on the hills of Asia, and the sailors on the Propontis the splendid orgies of the new Babylon.

Beside all this magnificence the Stamboul of to-day is nothing but an old queen sick of hypochondria."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CENTURY OF STAGNATION. "HIGH TIDE" AT VIENNA (1683 A. D.)

General Causes of the Ottoman Decline

For over two hundred years after the crossing of the Hellespont the Ottoman sultans, despite occasional repulses, seemed steadily advancing from glory to glory. But after the conquest of Cyprus in 1571 they won few additional territories. For a little more than a century the boundaries in the Near East remained fairly static, then in 1683 the Turks made a new and vigorous effort to resume their conquering path by capturing Vienna. They failed absolutely, and very soon were struggling as desperately on the defensive as had been the West when Solyman I was girt with the sword of Osman.

What were the causes of this century of stagnation (always equivalent to degeneration in an Oriental despotism), and of this decisive reverse? Some of the more general factors were undoubtedly these:

I. The Ottomans had now driven through the relatively weak South Slavs and Magyars, and were directly opposed to the more military Germans and Poles.

II. In their rear they always had Persia, a rival Moslem Empire, quite strong enough to press hard on their eastern Sanjaks whenever the Sultans became too involved in the West.[1]

III. The Ottomans had now been in Europe over two hundred years, an extremely long time for an Oriental race and dynasty to retain its virility and aggressiveness.

IV. The development of the art of war into a real science under the impulse of such great captains as Alexander Farnese, Maurice of Nassau and Gustavus Adolphus was something which the Turks were unable to imitate. The tactics that had quite sufficed against Louis of Hungary at Mohacz had become hopelessly antiquated by

[1] Shah Abbas actually took Bagdad from the Turks in 1623. The latter only regained it in 1638.

the middle of the seventeenth century when the Turks had to confront soldiers trained in the horrible but effective school of the Thirty Years' War.

The Ottomans in fact would doubtless have experienced a great military disaster long before 1683 had not this period of their stagnation coincided with the century of the Wars of the Counter Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, and of the first decades of Louis XIV; when the Christian powers were rending one another, and when Austria (the Turks' most formidable Christian neighbor) very often had the Swedes or French upon her back. The feuds of Christendom were thus once again the salvation of Islam.

Special Reasons for Turkish Degeneracy

Nevertheless in addition to these various factors over which, circumstances considered, the Ottomans might possibly have pleaded that they had no control, there were other evils more specific which were not really beyond the powers of a vigorous government to rectify. The first two Kiuprili viziers (1656-1676; see pp. 260-262) did indeed accomplish something in preventing the ruin of the state, but they were after all only ministers and not sovrans, and they were in a position to treat merely the symptoms, not the fundamentals of the disease. During the seventeenth century the following concrete abuses were helping to pull down the still vast and imposing Ottoman Empire.[2]

I. The Padishahs had "become invisible." Many of them had been reared in the harem in strict seclusion until totally bereft of any political education. They were incessantly trembling for their lives, until some revolution called them not to the bowstring but to supreme power. The Sultans had now ceased to preside at the council of viziers, to hear litigants, or to enjoy any opportunity to get unbiased reports about the bad deeds of their officials.

II. Along with this evil there went the inordinate influence of harem women and of eunuchs. Even if these persons were not iniquitous, they had never the least ideas of what might benefit the state. Frequently their intrigues could induce the Sultan to depose or even to bowstring a highly competent vizier. "The Sultan gov-

[2] These noxious forces were unsparingly set forth in an able memorial submitted to Murad IV by the astute and high-minded Khodji-beg, who probably prepared his report at the command of the Sultan himself. It is an exceedingly enlightening document.

erns no longer; the grand vizier is hindered in governing; the power is actually in the hands of negro eunuchs and purchased slave-girls." This of course was hardly true of the two great Kiuprili viziers, but it never ceased to be a constant danger.

III. The outrageous taxation of the subjects, especially of the Christian rayahs, wrought general demoralization. The imperial officials increased taxes at pleasure, and often levied new and unauthorized imposts. "The tears of the oppressed will drown the Empire in the waves of perdition" [Khodji-beg]. All this in other words meant economic decline and fiscal demoralization.

IV. The feudal spahis—holders of the military fiefs—by the seventeenth century were allowed to evade systematically their martial duties. Many fiefs were awarded as perquisites to harem women, to court eunuchs, to the sultan's dwarfs and mutes—persons utterly incapable of the slightest military service. The result was that this feudal cavalry, once a great factor in the armies, dwindled down to some 7000 or 8000 riders, and these often inefficient and ill-disciplined.

V. Most serious for the government was the change in the recruitment of the Janissaries. In the seventeenth century the blood-tax of Christian boys was dropped, and Moslems (to the general satisfaction of the Faithful) were now allowed to enroll in this privileged corps. Under Solyman I there had been some 12,000 Janissaries; a century later there were over 46,000. But their devotion and discipline were now utterly relaxed. They lost much of their value in battle; yet in Constantinople they often terrorized populace and sultan by their outrageous mutinies [3] and constant demands for more bounties and perquisites. "The formidable corps of 'slave-soldiers' had given place to an impudent and seditious city guard."

Along with this recruitment of the guard-corps from the regular Turkish population went a corresponding decline of the promotion of "slaves" and other ex-Christians to high office in the army and civil service. The administrative incapacity of the native Moslems wrought endless confusion in "The Ruling Institution." The ablest of the Kiuprili viziers failed in the end to reinvigorate the state,

[3] The first great mutiny of the Janissaries is commonly assigned to 1590, when they attacked the Seraglio and demanded the instant execution of a Beglerbeg of Roumelia and another obnoxious official. Soon their victims were grand viziers and presently they were sometimes Sultans.

thanks largely to sheer inability to find competent officials to execute good laws.

Incompetent Sultans. Murder of Osman II (1621)

During an epoch like this it is unnecessary to single out the reigns of most of the sultans. Some of them were less inert or unintelligent than others, but practically every one of them kept himself close to the great Seraglio palace at Constantinople, surrounded by his women and his eunuchs, and whatever successes he boasted were due to ability to select and maintain in office competent viziers.

Selim II (the "Sot," 1566-1574), as we have seen, vaunted himself the conqueror of Cyprus, thanks solely to the fact that the old officials of Solyman, his father, still could serve him. His son, Murad III (1574-1595), began his reign by strangling his five brothers in order to silence awkward questions about the succession.[4] The able grand vizier, Sokolli, was murdered by a disappointed petitioner in 1578, and so ended the last of the astute, masterful statesmen who had made the Ottoman power great. Henceforth, as the French ambassador wrote to Paris: "Women have a great part in this Empire." Murad III was largely controlled by his mother, the "Sultana-Validé" Nour-Banou, and after her by his Venetian favorite, Safiye, although this sway was sometimes divided with the shrewd old Djanfeda-Khatoun, the "Governess of the Harem"—who, with all the tyranny and influence of an indispensable family servant, often swayed the weak sultan to the great detriment of the entire Empire.

Mohammed III (1595-1603), Murad's son, signaled the beginning of his reign by strangling all *nineteen* of his brothers. His own son, Ahmed I (1604-1617), doubtless prided himself on his humanity because he allowed his one brother, Mustafa, to live—but Mustafa was an idiot! Ahmed displayed his unfitness to rule by allowing the Chief of the Black Eunuchs, an irresponsible negro, to become the most influential person in the Empire. However, it was a change for the worse when this Sultan died, and the witless Mustafa was actually proclaimed. The ulemas declared that the new mon-

[4] Murad III, it is said to his credit, refused at first upon his accession to order the deaths of his brothers. For eighteen hours he resisted the arguments of the muftis and the viziers that the peace of the empire required their destruction. Then at last he yielded. The "Chief of the Mutes" was ordered into the presence of the dead Sultan, and given five handkerchiefs for the five princes then in the Seraglio. Murad did this "sorely weeping."

arch's idiocy was a sign of "holiness," and expected to rule in his name. The result, of course, was such confusion that Osman II, son of Ahmed, was presently set on the throne (1618), but he proved grievously unable to control the army which was now getting completely beyond the bonds of discipline. In 1621 he was deposed by a general mutiny and dragged from the palace to the "Seven Towers" (the State Prison). There he was strangled—the first case of regicide in Ottoman annals but not the last. The mutineers thrust back Mustafa upon the throne, but thereby only caused an anarchy which nigh ruined the Empire. To save the state from irreparable harm the more decent elements at Constantinople at length united to depose the idiot a second time [5] and to put in his stead another son of Ahmed I who had been allowed to survive—Murad IV (1623-1640).

Sanguinary Reign of Murad IV (1623-1640)

The seemingly authentic tales of this potentate lend plausibility to many of the bizarre anecdotes in the "Arabian Nights." Murad undoubtedly endeavored honestly to reform his dominions and to end the abuse of the poor and weak by the tumultuous and the powerful. He did this by a wholesale use of the executioner which made him rival the exploits of Selim the Grim. He strangled a grand vizier for the avowed reason that the official had beaten his mother-in-law! He sat in a kiosk by the water-side in the Seraglio palace and took glee in shooting with bow and arrows at any boatman who incautiously rowed too near the imperial compound. By night he would sally forth with a boon companion, one Bianchi, an Italian renegade, visit incognito the lowest taverns of Stamboul, and if he discovered a man committing the new crime of smoking tobacco (then forbidden by Murad as vigorously and as vainly as in England by James I), would cast off disguise and on the spot behead the offender with his own hands. These stories can be indefinitely multiplied. They illustrate merely the effects of bestowing upon an unsteady youth colossal and irresponsible power.

Nevertheless there was usually a method in Murad IV's madness. Beyond question most of his victims deserved their fate, and his ferocity did accomplish a little to halt a lawlessness, oppression, and

[5] Mustafa, by a remarkable stroke of clemency, was permitted to live in retirement, and to die a natural death in 1639.

peculation that was destroying the Empire. Some of the wisest ulemas gave him advice that seems not useless in disordered Oriental monarchies: "The race of Adam is reformed by force and not by reason"; and again, "My Padishah, the only remedy for the present abuses is the sword." Murad possibly would have emerged from mere acts of terrorism and shown himself something like a constructive statesman (for he was no vulgar "man-slayer") if his life had not been cut short in 1640. In his stead reigned now his effeminate and generally worthless brother, Ibrahim I (1640-1648), who allowed public conditions speedily to slide back to their old evil state, and who made them even worse by the brutal violence of his character.

By 1648 disastrous wars had brought home to every responsible Ottoman the need of a radical change in the palace. The Janissaries for once joined with the ulemas in demanding the deposition of Ibrahim; "The Misbelievers capture the strong places. The markets are plundered. The innocent are put to death. Favorite slaves govern the world." The Sultan's son, Mohammed IV (1648-1687), was accordingly proclaimed while Ibrahim was strangled by the mutes. From this time onward the state of the Empire considerably improved. Mohammed himself was a mediocre prince, but he was fortunate even as Louis XIII was fortunate. Louis XIII was served by Richelieu—Mohammed IV was served by the Kiuprili viziers.

The Great Vizier Mohammed Kiuprili (Administration 1656-1661 A. D.)

It was not until 1656 that the Ottoman magnates persuaded the Sultan-mother who controlled this weak Sultan to offer the grand vizierate to the man whom circumstances were already designating as the preserver of the Empire. In that year, says the exultant Turkish historian, "the demons of cruelty, debauchery, and sedition, who had reached their meridian in [the preceding decades] . . . were obliged to yield up their crown of dominion, when the voice was heard which proclaimed Kiuprili Grand Vizier of the Empire."

Mohammed Kiuprili was the grandson of Moslem Albanians who had emigrated to Asia Minor. He began his career as a kitchen boy. By sheer ability he rose to such eminence that all patriotic factions united to put him on the very steps of the throne. He only accepted office on condition that the Sultan-mother and the Sultan should let

him act as practically the unchecked dictator of the realm. The Sultan-mother in behalf of her son actually swore to his arrogant terms,—that all his measures should be ratified without discussion; that he should have complete and unquestioned power to appoint, to reward, and to punish; that no great man or favorite should be allowed any influence against him; and that all accusations or insinuations against him should be instantly rejected. Under these conditions he undertook to save the afflicted Empire.

Kiuprili was grand vizier from 1656 until his death in 1661. During that time he walked in the steps of Murad IV, and restored order to the realm by the pitiless execution of all evil-doers, however high their station. His spies soon were everywhere, reporting past delinquency or present sedition. He hanged the Greek patriarch for writing a letter expressing the hope that the Ottoman power soon would crumble. He was equally severe with lawless and fanatical dervishes and ulemas. Kiuprili never wasted his time with threats and warnings. "His blows outsped his words." Thirty-six thousand persons are said to have been executed by his orders within five years. The chief executioner of Constantinople later declared that within that time he had himself strangled 4000 and thrown the corpses in the Bosphorus.[6] Kiuprili seems to have followed out this policy in good faith, believing it to be the only method for purging the Empire of evil elements. Possibly in this he was not, considering existing conditions, very greatly mistaken.

Ahmed Kiuprili's Excellent Vizierate (1661-1676 A. D.)

On his deathbed Kiuprili was asked, by his sorrowing master, who could best continue his work of reformation. "I know of none better than my son, Ahmed," was his candid response; then he gave the Sultan four maxims: "Listen not to the counsels of women; let not a subject become too rich; by every means fill the treasury; keep continually on horseback and give constant employment to the army." Mohammed IV was too sluggish to obey these directions personally, but he promptly made Ahmed Kiuprili his grand vizier. The latter became the real ruler of Turkey from 1661 to his death

[6] Turkish public opinion admitted that a Padishah could put to death "three thousand persons per year" without accounting to any one save Allah. Mohammed Kiuprili, who was only the Sultan's deputy, far exceeded this rather generous allowance for despotism; but he was excused because nearly all his victims deserved their punishment.

in 1676; and he is justly eulogized both by Ottoman and Christian historians as "the greatest statesman of his country." Unlike his father (perhaps merely because his father had finished a necessary if ungrateful work) he was usually humane, and he made a really earnest effort to lessen the burdens of taxation, and to protect the masses from the exactions and violence of the feudal Spahis, the begs, and others among the mighty. Despite evidences of decadence in the Empire matters had not gone so far that this wise and just minister could not accomplish a perceptible if only temporary improvement of the state.

Ahmed Kiuprili was defeated indeed in the great battle of St. Gotthard by the Austrians (see p. 263), but in other wars (with the Poles and Venetians) he was usually successful. Unfortunately a large part of his worthy civil reforms perished with him, when in 1676 there died this true "light and splendor of the nation; the conservator of good laws; the vicar of the shadow of God." It was not in the power of Mohammed IV to find a third prime minister like unto him. The next grand vizier, Kara Mustafa ("Black Mustafa"), who held power from 1676 through 1683, was rather a showy, ambitious personage, exceedingly covetous, who never subordinated his personal schemes to the weal of the Empire. The result was that the forces of decay—partially arrested by the two great Kiuprilis, resumed their potency, and were presently blazoned to the world by a great military disaster.

Wars Under the Kiuprili Viziers. Battle of St. Gotthard (1664 A. D.)

Without power to affect fundamental reforms it is not surprising that even the great Kiuprili viziers could not give back to the Empire successful aggressiveness. The Ottoman military pride, however, died very hard. The monarchy was still indeed imposing in its size. It could still muster armies extremely formidable to the weaker European powers or to those beset by desperate feuds with their Christian neighbors. During a twenty-five-year war (1644-1669), during which Venice vainly sought effective help from the West, the Turks wrested from her Crete ("Candia") and practically banished her from Greek waters, save only from her possession of Corfu (old Corcyra) and other Ionian Isles. In 1672 the Sultan

became also involved in a war with Poland, in which the Turks captured and for years retained possession of the strong fortress of Kemenets and wrung from the ill-governed Slavic "Commonwealth" the cession of most of Podolia. This last result, however, was far more due to the generally distracted state of Poland rather than to any inferiority of her armies. When in 1673 the struggle was renewed, and Kiuprili laid siege to the other great fortress of Chotin, it was only to see his army sorely defeated in a great pitched battle.

This was by no means the first indication that Ottoman leaders would have done well to hesitate ere they attempted offensive warfare with the scientifically organized and commanded armies of the greater Christian powers. As a rule during this period Turkey had at least nominally kept up the old relations with France, and considered her an "ally"; but this friendship often became very cold.[7] Louis XVI, much as he hated Austria, was entirely willing to teach the Sultan that he could only hope to prevail over the "Holy Roman Emperor" when he made Ottoman ambitions subserve French policy. In 1664 Ahmed Kiuprili ventured to invade the Austrian lands in a year when the Emperor and Louis were actually at peace. The French king promptly offered so large an army to assist the Austrians that the latter became alarmed lest they be put under too heavy obligations. They only accepted 6000 troops, but these were the very pick of Louis's forces under the Count de Coligny. Kiuprili, with a host of 120,000 Orientals, meanwhile advanced, ravaging the Christian territories, until by the monastery of St. Gotthard on the Raab he met the Imperialists under Montecuculi with the new French auxiliaries. There were barely 20,000 Christians in their entire army, but they were led by great captains. When the Vizier saw the white perukes of the French as they charged to battle he demanded in amazement, "Who are these girls?" But, raising their dreaded cry, *"Allons! Allons! Tue! Tue!"* Coligny's men speedily scattered the Janissaries with a terrific onslaught. The Turks were driven discomfited from the field. The Emperor (fearing too much French assistance) soon, it is true, made peace on terms extremely favorable to the Ottomans, but the latter indeed should have had their warning. St. Gotthard had taught the world that the small

[7] In 1640, when the French ambassador notified his masters' "ally" of a victory won over the Spaniards, the Grand Vizier remarked bluntly: "It matters little to the Padishah whether the dogs devour the swine; or the swine devour the dogs!"

Western armies, properly led, could now rout the Sultan's huge hosts in open battles.[8]

Second Siege of Vienna by Kara Mustafa (1683 A. D.)

Matters thus drifted till 1683, when the grand vizier, Kara Mustafa,—Ahmed Kiuprili's son-in-law, to be sure, but no heir to his probity and intelligence,—opened his ears to the projects of certain Hungarian rebels against the Hapsburgs. He mobilized the whole available strength of the Ottoman Empire and undertook to do that which Solyman I had failed to accomplish. With over 200,000 men he pushed up the Danube against Vienna.

The moment seemed not ill-chosen. Louis XIV was probably about to resume his old wars with Austria. The French king even exerted his diplomacy to prevent the Hapsburgs from getting allies, his own apparent desire being that Vienna should fall, and that then he (as the all-powerful champion of Christian civilization) could intervene to expel the Turk to his own great benefit. Kara Mustafa in his turn appears to have been dreaming a disloyal dream of carving out a separate kingdom for himself in the Danube valley. In any case, when he made his attack, Leopold of Austria was taken almost unawares. He could barely throw 13,000 men into Vienna and flee himself to Passau, calling loudly for help to the lesser German princes, and especially to the valorous John Sobieski, the elective king of Poland, the victor of Chotin. The latter responded fairly promptly, not because he loved Austria greatly, but because the safety of Poland would have been in sore jeopardy if the Turks were once fairly ensconced at Vienna.

Sweeping up the Danube valley with his enormous host, swollen now by Wallachian vassal contingents and by Hungarian malcontents, Kara Mustafa encamped before Vienna on July 14, 1683. The failure of the Austrian ministers to realize their danger betimes and bring up prompt assistance almost ruined the situation for their master. The imperial general, Charles of Lorraine, with a very weak field army, did his best to ease the pressure on the garrison by

[8] The Battle of St. Gotthard had insignificant military results, but in the light of future events it forms a real landmark in history. "It gave the first proof that the Turks had lost their military superiority." Their courage and obstinacy were the same as ever, but their tactics were those of the age of Solyman. The Christians were now far superior to them in their artillery, their cavalry and especially in the use of the pike (the chief infantry weapon). Montecuculi blazed the way for the victories of Charles of Lorraine and Prince Eugene. So "the Beast sent upon earth to do mischief" gradually lost some of his terror.

cutting off the Turkish supplies, as well as by a valorous and successful defense of Pressburg. If, however, the grand vizier had known his business, or Count Stahremberg (the governor of the besieged capital) had flinched in the slightest, Vienna, at least for the moment, would have gone the way of Constantinople. Kara Mustafa, however, wasted several precious days getting comfortably encamped in the suburbs, and in that short interval the garrison got the defenses in some kind of order. Then at length began the incessant assaults and the inflexible resistance.

The Ottomans attacked directly many times, supplementing their infantry by a bombardment terrific for seventeenth-century artillery, and (still more terrible to the besieged) by no less than 40 mines, driven very skillfully, with which at length they destroyed nearly all of the Christian bastions. But even as in 1529 the Viennese populace rose to the situation gallantly. Companies of citizens fought and bled beside the regulars. A group of university volunteers argued cogently with pike and musket. Every foot which the Infidel won he paid for with infinite blood. Nevertheless the situation was soon terrible. If Kara Mustafa had been willing to fling away his men in headlong charges, never counting the slain, as Mohammed II had done before Constantinople, doubtless he could have stormed the city long before the dramatic crisis. But he was probably held back by a reasonable fear that if such assaults should fail he would be held to strict accountability by the Sultan for tremendous losses, and in addition by a less honest desire that the city should fall not by assault but by capitulation; in which case the soldiers could not plunder the inhabitants, but the vizier could wring from the latter a great indemnity for his own private coffers.

Despite this hesitancy the assault advanced. The imagination kindles at the story of how, after infinite struggle, by the end of August the Turks were lodged in the ditches of the defenders; how by the 4th of September they could explode a great mine under the strategic "Burg" bastion, thereby "shaking half of the city" and making a wide breech, easy of assault—but which assault, when it came, was roundly repulsed. A few days later another mine, however, enlarged the breach "so wide that a battalion might have entered it abreast."

The garrison was being worn down by fighting, sickness, and incessant labor. Stahremberg of course sent forth incessant appeals

for aid. Some of them were intercepted; and Kara Mustafa dispatched him a haughty message: "It is useless to write letters. The wretched condition of the city is known. If the besieged reject the clemency of the Vizier, full soon will they feel the weight of the divine anger."

Daily, the tale runs, the doughty governor ascended the tower of St. Stephen to look forth upon the enringing enemy and upon the distant hills beyond whence succor long delayed must come. After the mine explosion of the 10th, Stahremberg sent out his last courier to Duke Charles of Lorraine: "There is not a moment to be lost, not a moment!" And on the morning of the 11th, while Vienna crouched in terror, expecting the last and fatal attack, the anxious watchers detected significant movements in the camp of the enemy. At five o'clock in the afternoon a strange army was descried surmounting the distant Kahlenberg, and unfamiliar salvoes of artillery shook the air. John Sobieski, late, but not too late, was at hand.

Deliverance of Vienna by John Sobieski, King of Poland

The Polish army had mobilized slowly, and slowly it had been joined by a force of Saxons, Bavarians, and various other German volunteers. Added to Charles of Lorraine's forces, the whole relieving host numbered barely 70,000, but they were soldiers hard and fit, the match for any in the world, save possibly their French rivals. While Stahremberg looked forth from St. Stephen, John Sobieski from the Kahlenberg was viewing the besieged capital. Even across the years may be realized his tension when he beheld "the immense plain covered with pavilions, and innumerable multitude of horses, camels and buffaloes. Two hundred thousand men, all in motion, . . . while [around the city] the fire of the besiegers was incessant and terrible, and that of the besieged such only as they could contrive to make," with the tall steeples of Vienna barely appearing above the haze of fire and smoke.

Sobieski instantly saw, however, that the Vizier had delivered himself into his hands. Kara Mustafa had dwelt in a fool's paradise. Confident that the Poles could not arrive ere the city surrendered, he had neglected to block the roads by which the relieving army must approach. The experienced Ibrahim, Pasha of Buda, now besought him to draw off his best troops from before the walls, and dispute the difficult ravines west of the city, by which alone the

rescuers could advance. The Vizier would have none of this advice. He virtually allowed the Christians to advance with his own army spread in a long, thin circumference around Vienna, and with no sufficient concentration at the point where Sobieski was sure to strike. The King exultantly took in the situation at a glance. "This man knows nothing of war," he declared. "We shall certainly defeat him!"

On the morning of the 12th, the Poles and the Imperialists rushed down from the Kahlenberg. There was hard fighting at some of the villages, but on the whole the Christian victory was surprisingly easy. The battering charges of the Polish and German cavalry swept away the Ottomans. The Janissaries were caught in their trenches between the relieving army and the rejoicing garrison and were almost cut to pieces. By night the whole great Infidel host was flying in headlong rout, in one of those enormous panics that now and again will seize upon Oriental armies. At next dawn the victors looked about for foes to contend against. They were nowhere. At ten o'clock that morning the rabble of Turks was racing across the Raab, covering in one night a journey they had consumed eight days in making on the advance.

The besiegers lost 10,000 men slain outright (their headlong flight prevented greater slaughter), 300 heavy cannon, 5000 tents. Treasure of 15,000,000 crowns was taken, whereof 400,000 were in the Vizier's private coffers. All the Turkish standards were captured, save only the "Sacred Standard of the Prophet," which the fugitives saved by desperate exertions.[9] Kara Mustafa fled precipitately to Belgrade, leaving the Christian allies to sweep in the Hungarian fortresses. At Belgrade, frantic with wrath and terror, he proceeded to execute those sagacious officers whose military advice he had wantonly disregarded. But before he could slay them all, the news of his calamity had reached Stamboul. In anguish and fury the Sultan ordered the ministers of death to Belgrade. On December 25, the bowstring in its turn tightened around Kara Mustafa, and all his ill-gotten wealth was confiscated for his master's treasury.

The Second Siege of Vienna marks the "high tide" for the attack

[9] Very appropriately after Sobieski entered Vienna in triumph, in the service of Thanksgiving at St. Stephen's Cathedral the preacher spoke on the text, "There was a man sent from God whose name was *John!*" A similar use of the text had of course been made after Don Juan of Austria's victory at Lepanto.

of the Turanian Turks upon Europe. Doubtless they could not have made Vienna a second Constantinople set on the edge of Germany, but if even for a while they had possessed themselves of the city the blow inflicted in one way or another upon Western civilization would have been great. Such a calamity John Sobieski averted. "This time" the Turks had been repelled from Central Europe "never again to return thither." [Von Hammer.]

CHAPTER XXIV

THE OTTOMAN RETREAT BEFORE AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA (1683-1791 A. D.)

Disasters to the Turks After Relief of Vienna

The overthrow before Vienna unloosed upon the Ottomans a whole wind-bag of calamities. Only the fact that Louis XIV, their "very Christian" ally, soon began the "War of the Palatinate Succession" (1689-1697), prevented their foes from inflicting upon them extreme humiliation; and even with the French threatening all their interests in the West the Hapsburgs were now able to teach the Turks what it meant to measure swords with professional Western armies that were led presently by no less a captain than Prince Eugene of Savoy, the compeer of Marlborough. The elimination of Kara Mustafa, "whose head was brought to the Sultan upon a silver dish," only left a desperate situation for his successors in the vizierate. After a long ignoble reign at length the garrison of Constantinople mutinied against Mohammed IV, who was replaced by his brother,[1] Solyman II (1687-1691), and, upon the natural death of the latter, by another brother, Ahmed II (1691-95). Neither of these monarchs had the ability to put any real vigor and competence into the Ottoman armies.

This epoch was marked by a last gleam of martial energy on the part of Venice. In Morosini, "the Peloponnesiarch," the venerable republic had found a general of superior capacity. In 1685 he conquered the Morea, and the tale of how he besieged and took Athens, shattering with his bombs the priceless Parthenon, then used

[1] Moslem opinion had at last put a stop to the hideous practice of fratricide in the house of Osman. But though the brothers of the Sultan were allowed to live, their treatment completely ruined their capacity to govern if ever they were called to the throne. They spent practically their entire lives in a luxurious prison significantly called "The Cage." Here they were allowed the company only of eunuchs and harem women, and were informed as little about the world as possible.

Solyman II spent the forty-six years before he came to the throne in complete seclusion devoted to religious studies. He was dismayed when thrust upon the throne, strove to refuse the dignity, and consented "trembling from head to foot." Needless to say he proved no leader for a crisis.

a Turkish powder magazine, is known to every lamenting student of antiquity. But the Turks were touched now at a far sorer point in the North. The Poles indeed soon quarreled with the Austrians and practically withdrew from the war, but the Hapsburg armies were at length getting their full stride. In 1686 they took Buda, the key to Hungary, and one of the fairest conquests of Solyman I. In 1687, on the famous field of Mohacz, they met their old foes in a great open battle, and this time the Ottomans were routed utterly. By 1688 the Austrians were well across the Save and had taken Belgrade. The Turkish forces seemed utterly demoralized. The tale runs of a Jew, sent on an important mission for the Sultan, who was offered a government convoy. "It is needless," spoke he sarcastically. "I have but to wear my cap in the German fashion and not a Turk will touch me."

More Turkish Defeats. Battle of Zenta. Peace of Karlowitz (1699 A. D.)

Solyman II did indeed summon to the vizierate, Mustafa Kiuprili, brother of the great Ahmed (see p. 261), who again justified the fame of his family by an energetic and wise administration (1689-1691). If he did not enable the Turks to avoid grievous defeat, he at least enabled them to prevent an advance of their enemies. By cutting off the luxurious palace service, by the suppression of corrupt perquisites, and by taxes which smote the powerful as well as the feeble, a war fund was accumulated, while something like discipline was also restored to the demoralized army. Mustafa Kiuprili had even the liberal intelligence to try to stop the exploitation of the Christian Rayahs, and he outraged the intolerant ulemas by allowing the rebuilding of ruined churches. "He has founded more churches than Justinian" became the current saying of the delighted Christians.

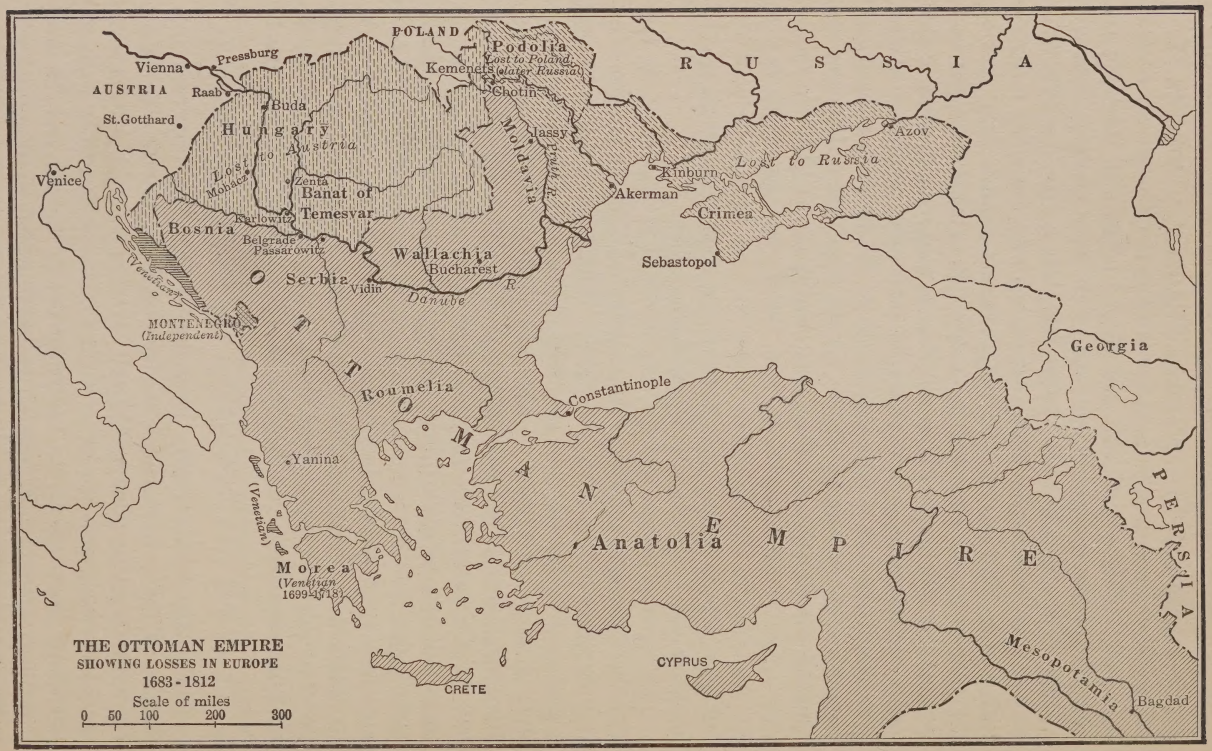
Unfortunately this truly remarkable Vizier was not allowed the deliberate years of a constructive statesman, but only the hectic months of a public emergency. At Salankeman, on the confines of Hungary, he imprudently gave battle to the Austrians and was slain while striving heroically to rally his defeated army (1691). From this time—despite occasional gleams of fair fortune—the war went steadily against the Ottomans. The climax came in 1697 when

Prince Eugene met the full Turkish field army, with Sultan Mustafa II in nominal command, at Zenta upon the Theiss. The Ottoman pashas and agas were at discord and coöperated most poorly, and part of the Janissaries mutinied at the very crisis of Eugene's attack. The result inevitably, therefore, was a complete Christian victory, the Turks losing more than 15,000 men, including many of their leaders, and leaving the Sultan's harem and the great seal of the Empire in Christian hands. After this catastrophe there was nothing left the humbled Orientals but to make peace, despite the agony caused to the Padishah's ministers at being compelled to sign (for almost the first time in the history of the Empire) a disadvantageous treaty after a great defeat. Lord Paget, the ambassador for England, which was even thus early mixing in the "Eastern Question," assisted the negotiations, and, being very anxious to enable the Austrians to turn their full power towards France, he used his influence now to induce the Ottomans to bend their proud necks, and now the Austrians to give reasonable terms.

The result at length was the treaty signed at *Karlowitz* on the Danube (January, 1699). This compact marked the advent of a new era in the history of the Near East. The Turks ceded to Venice the Morea: to Poland they gave back Kemenets, and above all to Austria they surrendered Transylvania and nearly the whole of Hungary save only the southern district of the "Banat." Not merely had the Ottomans lost many wide territories: the whole bubble of their military prestige had been pricked: they appeared at last as a sprawling, vulnerable barbarian empire, whose members were fair prey for any great Christian power that was not too involved with its neighbors. "From this time forth all serious dread of the military power of Turkey ceased in Europe." [Creasy.] The prolonged but unhalted dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was in full prospect.

Turkey and Her Neighbors in the Eighteenth Century

During the next century the main factor which preserved the Empire of the Sultans from decisive overthrow was the fact that two great Western powers, England and France, each for its own special reasons, usually exerted great diplomatic influence to keep the Turks from undergoing too many deadly attacks from Russia and Austria, and because both of those continental empires had their own desperate wars nearer the heart of Europe, or possessed neigh-


POLAND
Podolia
Lost to Poland (after Russia)
Kemenets
Chotin
RUSSIA
Vienna
Pressburg
AUSTRIA
Raab
Buda
St.Gotthard
Hungary
Austria
Lost to Moslems
Venice
Zenta
Banat of Temesvar
Jassy
Moldavia
Pruth R.
Azov
Kinburn
Lost to Russia
Akerman
Crimea
Bosnia
Belgrade
Passarowitz
Wallachia
Bucharest
Sebastopol
Venetians
Servia
Vidin
Danube R.
MONTENEGRO
(Independent)
OTTOMAN
Roumelia
Constantinople
Georgia
Yanina
Gulf of Venice
Morea
(Venetian 1699-1718)
Anatolia
EMPIRE
PERSIA
Mesopotamia
Bagdad
CYPRUS
CRETE
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
SHOWING LOSSES IN EUROPE
1683 - 1812
Scale of miles
0 50 100 200 300

bors more available for spoliation (such as Poland), which performance kept their armies busy. The Ottoman Empire therefore remained all through the eighteenth century a huge dominion, overshadowing by its bulk the Near East, but with its feebleness increasingly manifest. Turkish armies were still indeed brave and at times could be very formidable. The Turkish soldier was still (as he remained in 1914-1918) a first-class fighting man, especially when on the defensive. Foreign officers in the Sultan's pay also did something to improve the quality of his forces. Nevertheless, in this long, unhappy period there was no real arrest of the forces of decay, and if an occasional vizier showed gleams of firmness and innovating intelligence, his usual end was that of massacre by the Janissaries who had become by this time the passionate and mutinous champions of everything bad connected with the old order.

Some of the more important landmarks in the eighteenth century are these:

I. In 1715 the Sultans showed that they had yet strength enough to deal with Venice, when that decrepit oligarchy could not command a strong ally. The Venetians had taxed and regulated the Greeks of the Morea so systematically and inexorably that many of the latter were at least willing to submit a return of the more pliable Turkish tyranny. The Ottomans were therefore able to reconquer the Morea with no serious difficulty.

II. This success was nevertheless completely offset by the new defeats by Austria, when the Ottomans foolishly attacked the Hapsburgs in 1716. The reaction came after in a great defeat at Peterwaradein, almost as fearful a reverse as at the Zenta. The Sultan had to sign the Peace of Passarowitz (a Serbian town), by which not merely his last holdings in Hungary, but part of Wallachia and even some districts in Northern Serbia, were ceded to Austria (1718).

III. The real danger to Turkey lay now increasingly to the North of the Black Sea. That Peter the Great (1689-1725) should take up the old ambition of Russian people to seize "Tsargrad" and to gain a maritime outlet on southern waters was inevitable. In 1696 he succeeded in capturing Azov upon the Black Sea, and held that war-harbor until 1711, when, in a rash moment, trusting to the fallacious promises of the malcontent Roumanian hospodars, the Czar crossed the Pruth with inferior forces. Here he found himself hemmed in so dangerously by a huge Turkish army that he was glad

to buy a peace by ceding back Azov and by renouncing for the nonce all his threats against the Sultan. But such a repulse merely implied that the Russian attack would be renewed, when the enormous Muscovite Empire was better organized for offensive warfare.

IV. Russia, however, had probably seemed to the Turks anything but a menace to their safety until late in the seventeenth century. Venice, Poland, and Austria had appeared the only Christian neighbors to be reckoned with. Venice was sinking in general decay. Poland was disintegrating into a territory rent by selfish factions. Austria was, of course, far stronger, but the Hapsburg dominions were very ill compacted and were under the constant threat of capital wars with France. The size and population of Russia were dimly realized at Constantinople, but the disaster of Peter the Great upon the Pruth probably led Turkish leaders to underestimate for a while longer that new peril which had arisen to the North. They were undeceived when in 1736 the Russians renewed the war, and speedily invaded the Crimea and took many fortresses along the Black Sea. Matters apparently were made even more serious when Austria joined Russia in her attack. The Turks indeed demonstrated (as so many times later) that if pushed to bay they had remarkable powers of military recuperation. They actually forced the Austrians out of their Serbian province, thrust them over the Danube, and put a halt to the Russian successes.[2] As a result the Treaty of Belgrade (1739) gave back to the Turks the Serbian and Wallachian lands ceded to Austria in 1718. But the Russians were allowed to keep Azov, though not to have warships on the Black Sea. This brought the Muscovites definitely to the verge of the Near East—and a new chapter of Levantine history was opening.

V. Turkey obtained this apparent success, and a long respite following, because all her rivals were girding themselves for the long foreseen War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and then for the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the results whereof were life-and-death matters for Austria, while the Russian interest in these struggles was also great. The respite at length ended when the "Semiramis of the North," that non-moral and ruthless princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, became Empress of All the Russias as *Catherine II*

[2] Prince Eugene was now dead, the Austrian leaders were men of astonishing incapacity, who proved the best possible allies for the Turks. Austria too was hindered by the just fear of a great war in Europe the moment the feeble Charles VI of Hapsburg died.

(1762-1796). The Turks had made very poor use of their opportunity to reform either their civil state or their armies. The result was a long series of disasters.

Catherine of Russia's Conquests from the Turks (1768-1774 and 1787-1792 A. D.)

"Catherine the Great" needed brilliant military successes to justify her usurpation before the Muscovite peoples. Russian armies were now far better organized than in the days of Peter, and Catherine with all her sins knew how to select competent generals and inspire them to great exertions. She had in the Baltic a considerable fleet, officered largely indeed by Englishmen, but for that very reason the more likely to outmatch the very antiquated and decrepit Ottoman navy. The only things that really saved Turkey from general ruin were Catherine's knowledge that France, England, and Austria were already revolving schemes to prevent Russia from waxing too strong, and her own desire to spoil and divide unhappy Poland—nearer at hand and still less able to resist than the Ottoman.

Even as it was, the results were terrible for the Sultans. Catherine's first war with the Turks lasted from 1768 to 1774. Not merely did the Czarina's armies seize Ismail, Bender, and others of the great barrier fortresses covering the mouths of the Danube and Dniester, but a Russian fleet from the Baltic ranged about the Ægean, defeated the Ottoman navy at Tchesme, off Chios (1770), and stirred up a dangerous if futile rising of the Greeks in the Morea. In 1774 the discouraged Turks were fain to make the disastrous treaty of Kainardji, by which many of their strongholds north of the Black Sea were ceded to Russia outright and the Tartar Khanate of the Crimea was declared to be "independent," i.e., left under Russian influence with the Sultan unable to interfere. More serious still were the vague clauses giving the Czars the right to "make representations in behalf of 'the new Church at Constantinople,' " which the Russians were allowed to build—an opening wedge for a far wider religious protectorate over the Rayahs.

The diplomatic world recognized that this treaty marked an epoch in the history of the East. "If the Porte can possibly be saved it must be by very new measures," incisively wrote Thugut, a clever French diplomat: while already Russia was considered to have "made the Ottoman Empire into a kind of province."

Catherine's second war (1787-1792) with the Turks confirmed the gains of the first war. In 1784 she had, in violation of the treaty, deliberately annexed the Crimea, while she allowed her courtiers and favorites to agitate grandiose schemes for following "the road to Byzantium," and for setting her grandson, Constantine, on the old throne of the Palaiologoi. The story of Potemkin's and Suvarov's campaigns in Bessarabia and Moldavia is a miserable tale of sanguinary battles and the sacrifice of innocent noncombatants, but they ended with the Turks again roundly defeated and in a humbly thankful mood because the last phases of the division of Poland, and the threatening international aspects of the French Revolution inclined Catherine to negotiate reasonably. The "Treaty of Jassy" (1792) gave the Russians the legal title to the Crimea. It also extended their boundaries along the Black Sea to the Dniester. The impotence of the Ottomans before the Muscovites was therefore spread large before the world. Henceforth French and British diplomats were smitten with increasing fear lest by seizing the Bosphorus the Czars would not merely become the unshakable dominators of the Near East, but by controlling all the direct routes to India would spread their ægis over the remoter Orient.

During the entire century there reigned not one Sultan of superior ability, although a few showed a partial sense of their great responsibilities. Some of them had intelligence enough to name fairly competent viziers, who struggled with intelligence against the ever-increasing disorders at home and the perils abroad. It was frankly realized by many Ottoman leaders that until their army and many civil institutions were largely reorganized according to Western models their national existence was in growing jeopardy, but every half-hearted attempt at reform broke down before the stubborn refusal of the ulemas to listen to "Giaour" heresies, and before the mutinies of the Janissaries at the least hint of an improved discipline. The names of the Sultans therefore during this entire epoch are usually of little importance. From 1789 to 1807 there did indeed reign a Padishah, Selim III, who struggled vainly to reform his government, but whose well-intentioned efforts awakened such resentment among the privileged that in 1807 he was deposed, and next, in 1808, when the "reform party" among the pashas proposed to restore him, was hastily executed. In his stead this ad-

vanced element now exalted his nephew, Mahmud II (1808-1839), who was to strive earnestly, and with a few gleams of success to give the Ottoman empire a new lease of life by westernizing its institutions.

CHAPTER XXV

THE NEAR EAST DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY AND NAPOLEONIC ERA

Evil State of the Turkish Empire About 1790 A. D.

When the reverberations of the French Revolution began to shake Europe, the Ottoman Empire appeared ready prey for the Russian spoiler whenever the latter could concentrate his energies for the task. Westerners, impressed all too clearly by the signs of Turkish inefficiency and disintegration, underestimated the still admirable fighting qualities of the Ottoman soldiery, especially in wars that were distinctly for their existence as a nation. They underestimated, too, the inability of the Czars, thanks to poor organization, dishonest administration, poor roads, poor transport and the like, to direct more than a small fraction of their vast armies against the Infidel usurpers of Tsargrad.[1] Nevertheless it is fair to say that from 1792 to 1914 only one thing saved the Empire of the Sultans from complete absorption by the Muscovite—the "Thou shalt not" from the rest of Christian Europe.

The Ottoman Empire, when Catherine the Great signed the Peace of Jassy (1792), seemed like a vast organism dying in parts and by inches. There had been many internal changes since the Empire had been remolded by Solyman "the Lawgiver." The dominions of Selim III were now divided into twenty-six "Vilāyets," parcelled out into some 160 smaller "Livās." The Vilāyets were ruled by "Pashas of Three Horse Tails." [2] Many of the Livās were also ruled by "Pashas" of an inferior dignity.[3] Twenty-two Livās were

[1] In no campaign were the Czars able to bring their full strength to bear upon the Turks. Apart from the great difficulty (before the days of railroads) of moving and supplying large armies across the steppes of southern Russia, the moment the Muscovites crossed the Pruth, and still more when they crossed the Danube, their long lines of communication were exposed to instant and deadly attack upon the flank by Austria. Considering the jealousy of the Hapsburgs, the Russians simply *could not* invade the Ottoman territories without taking infinite precautions.

[2] The "Horse-Tail" constituted a standard of honor for Turkish dignitaries. Inferior Pashas had only two or one horse tail.

[3] Hence the Turkish provinces were often called unofficially *"Pashaliks."*

held by governors on life appointment: the others were supposed to be named annually, although a powerful Pasha, or one who knew where to place his money in the divan or the harem, could usually play the local despot for many years.

The Pashas. How They Gained Office. Iniquitous Lesser Magnates

The great ambition of the average Turkish official was a "Pashalik." This could only be obtained by money: and since few Ottomans had the necessary personal funds the only recourse for raising the enormous backsheesh, and the more lawful fees due to the treasury, was a rich Greek of the Phanar, or an even more important Armenian banker. "The lender of the money became in reality the mortgagee of the Pashalik, inasmuch as his confidential agent accompanied the Pasha as secretary, and was often the real ruler of the province." The Pasha soon had to repurchase his annual appointment, which proceeding implied more loans and more gilded slavery. Sometimes the "Sarraf" (Armenian banker) actually became surety to the imperial treasury that the Pasha would discharge his obligations. Such Christian "powers behind the throne" were (as has happened often enough) more merciless than the Turks in squeezing and exploiting the unhappy Rayahs. In the provinces extortion and every form of corruption were the order of the day. The "Provincial Notables," prominent Moslems of the region, were helpless to affect this system except to share in the spoils.

The Pashas had powers of life and death. They had little courts, seraglios and armies. If they transmitted the expected revenues to Constantinople few sultans cared or dared to ask how they were ruling their provinces, unless the cry against their misrule threatened to provoke actual rebellion, or they had become so wealthy there was much to gain by strangling them for their undoubted crimes and then confiscating their property.[4]

But the Pashas were by no means universally obeyed. All over the Empire, especially in Anatolia, abounded the "Dereh Begs" ("Lords of the Vallies"), hereditary feudatories who had long ceased to render efficient military service, but who "emulated the worst

[4] At this epoch "it was calculated that about *one half* of the product of each man's industry was paid to the government in one way or another throughout the provinces." (Wm. Miller.) All things considered, this is a moderate estimate, which probably understates the truth.

baronial or knightly abuses that ever were witnessed in Germany or France." The attempt of an imperial officer to enforce the Sultan's will upon the lands of a Dereh Beg would have been met with immediate resistance and defiance. These begs were, of course, not the only kind of local magnates who administered the law according to their irresponsible pleasure. In Bosnia and Serbia the Moslem landlords mocked at any sagacious attempt by the Porte to make them mitigate the lot of their Rayahs. In Greece, where there were still Christian Notables (*archontes*), their treatment of their fellow believers among the peasants was hardly better. "It is impossible to supply any adequate description of the number and nature of the local powers that struggled with one another and with the central government of Turkey during the wild misrule of her own anarchy." [5] [Creasy.]

The Feeble Central Administration and the Degenerating Army

The Sultan still had his viziers, his divan, his defterdars over the treasury, his grand mufti and his ulemas. There was, however, no competent corps of ministers such as makes possible the working of an efficient despotism. The "slaves" had mostly disappeared from the "Ruling Institution" (see p. 236): although clever renegadoes still, of course, found their opportunities. The Ottomans were ever at their worst as politicians.[6] They were now degenerating as soldiers. The Janissaries had at last increased to about 150,000 men "partaking of the imperial soup." These now formed a large community spread through the Empire, arrogant of their privileges, jealous of every attempt at reform, at the beck of any fanatical ulema who told them "the Sultan and vizier are betraying the Faithful to the Giaours," and oppressive beyond the run of Moslems toward the Rayahs. The privileges of this huge pampered corps were so great that the grossest frauds were indulged in by the run

[5] The government of Moldavia and Wallachia was peculiar. These principalities had kept their local nobility and laws. But after 1711 and the threat then of Russian intervention, the Porte considered it unsafe to leave the native princes as "hospodars." The two hospodars were therefore Phanariot Greeks who had usually gained their appointments by heavy money payments to the Porte. Except as they were Christians, they usually had little in common with their subjects, and they were removed from office so frequently that they could only have time to oppress but very seldom to benefit the Roumanians.

[6] It has been well observed that the generous and high minded Moslem country gentlemen of Thrace or Anatolia at once developed into "sordid, grasping tyrants and selfish voluptuaries" when clothed with the powers of a Pasha. Among no people were the evils of court intrigue and of sudden advancement to power more in evidence than among the Ottomans.

of Turks (now alone eligible) in order to get enrolled, while the officers grew rich by padding the lists and drawing the pay of non-existent privates. To keep this vast body of unruly guardsmen from mutiny was apparently now the very first problem of every Sultan and grand vizier.

The rest of the army was made up of contingents hardly more reliable, although over the artillery force Topdjis seem to have had somewhat better discipline. The Sultan could muster 300,000 men at the opening of a campaign, but many of these were only irregulars useless in pitched battles. Strategy and tactics awakened the disgust of military visitors from the West. The French General Boyer described the Turkish troops as "without order or firmness: unable even to march in platoons, advancing in confused groups, and falling on the enemy in a sudden start of savage fury." The one saving quality of the Ottoman troops was still, as often remarked, their obstinate courage when defending fortified towns. The Sultan's fortresses were usually defended to the last gasp. This slowed up the advance of even a formidable invader.[7]

General Defiance of the Sultan's Authority

Very naturally under such conditions the Empire began to be afflicted not merely by Christian attacks which it could not repel, but by internal disaffections, the precursors to downright revolt against the central power. In Arabia the religious sect of the Wahabites controlled practically the whole vast peninsula save only the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. In Egypt the old Memluk aristocracy (defeated but not abolished by Selim I) made the power of the Pasha, as the Sultan's representative, hardly more than nominal except in the region around Cairo. In Syria the Druses and other mountain tribes were substantially independent. In the Balkan peninsula the Turks had almost abandoned the hope of subduing the invincible Montenegrins (see p. 252, nt. 1), and the

[7] About 1760 the then Sultan Mustafa III invited various foreign officers to reform the defenses of the Empire. Their efforts were earnest but for the most part futile. The French Baron de Tott, "an astute little gentleman," has left a decidedly pungent account of the situation as he found it. "The Turks' weapons are the same as those used in the days of Sennacherib. As for their ships, they are utterly worthless. The men know absolutely nothing and their superstition baffles belief. They are very brave and very religious but otherwise quite useless. . . . The Janissaries are the terror of the country and will submit to no sort of discipline. They refuse to live in their barracks, which are filthy, and their insolence to foreigners is beyond endurance. . . . As for the Courts of Law, nothing can exceed the disorder which reigns in them. If this Empire is to be saved, everything must be reorganized on a new basis."

Sultan's mandate was very poorly obeyed in many parts of Greece, Epirus, Albania, and Herzegovina. He was still suzerain in name of Moldavia and Wallachia, but those principalities were now in fact under a Russian protectorate.

The most serious fact of all was that certain great Pashas were acting like independent kings. The Pasha of Acre was refusing to send tribute and was executing the Sultan's messengers whenever they came into his dominions. The Pasha of Bagdad was hardly less disobedient and defiant. A famous Pasha of Vidin (in Bulgaria), Passwan Oglou, defied with armed force all attempts to subdue him, and invaded neighboring provinces in the manner of a regular public enemy. Most notable of all these rebels was the great Ali who became about 1790 Pasha of Yanina (in Epirus), "a mixture of magnificence and meanness," who soon was practically the sovran of a large part of Albania and Northwestern Greece. Ali negotiated with Napoleon like an independent prince, and the Albanians (perhaps the most martial race in the Near East) delighted to follow the standard of this born leader who was "gifted with great sagacity, and embarrassed by no remorse and little fear." He held out until 1822, until almost the whole power of the Empire had been directed against him, and he then succumbed more because of treachery than the valor of his enemies.[8]

It is nigh impossible to overstate the amount of suffering which the sum of these evils inflicted upon the innocent millions of subjects, Moslems not much less than Christians, who professed allegiance to the "Lord of the Age," the "Shadow of the Universe." During the sixteenth and even in the seventeenth centuries the Ottoman yoke had been more or less tolerable. Now matters became so abominable that in certain regions at least the outraged Rayahs, like desperate animals, turned at bay. They had the example of the uprising Western Europe before them, and they had at length hopes, not entirely fallacious, of assistance from the Christian nations against the oppressor.

The Turks and Napoleon

The Sultan during most of the Revolutionary-Napoleonic period was Selim III (1789-1807), who, as earlier stated (see p. 276), was

[8] Readers of Dumas's "Count of Monte Cristo" will recall how the betrayal and end of Ali figures as one of the episodes of that novel. His career made a great impression upon the imaginations of the time.

superior to most of the Padishahs who followed Solyman I, and who made a faithful attempt to curtail a few of those evils which certain intelligent Ottomans now saw clearly were ruining the Empire. Most of all he strove to organize a corps of troops on the improved European model, and imported to Constantinople a considerable number of French artillerymen and drill-sergeants to serve as instructors. Nothing practical could be accomplished, however, in the face of the furious resistance of the Janissaries, and Selim was deposed and presently put to death largely because, although continually making well-meant attempts at reform, he lacked that courage and ruthlessness in dealing with dissidents which seem prime necessities when Oriental despots have to put through unpopular policies.

The Turks had not been anxious to mix in the wars of the French Revolution, but, of course, when in 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte suddenly landed at Alexandria and seized the Pashalik of Egypt there was nothing left for them save to declare war upon France. How the Corsican occupied the Nile valley, routed the Memluks, lost his fleet by Nelson's "Victory of the Nile" (1798), yet would probably have conquered Syria, except for the naval assistance which the British rendered the Turks, is a familiar chapter of universal history. Bonaparte, of course, soon returned to France after his Oriental adventure, but his generals held on to Egypt until 1801, when British pressure forced them to capitulate. The Turks then had a short respite from the wars convulsing Christian Europe until Russia felt herself sufficiently disengaged to resume her long, slow advance southward.

In 1805, when Czar Alexander I was about to join with England and Austria in that coalition which culminated so disastrously at Austerlitz, his ambassador formally demanded that the Porte make an alliance with Russia, and that all Greek Orthodox subjects of the Sultan should be "considered to be under the protection of the Czar," who would "make representations" to the Porte concerning them through his ambassador. Such a demand upon so arrogant a government as the Ottoman still remained, led naturally to hostilities, and drove the Sultan directly into the arms of the French. The Turks were stiffened in their resistance by the news of the victories of Napoleon, and were guided and encouraged to defy Alexander by the French ambassador, Sebastiani, one of the ablest diplomats

ever selected by the newly crowned "Emperor." When the Russians entered Moldavia "to restore tranquillity" the Porte declared war, even though the English fleet was bound to support its Muscovite ally.

The British Attack on Constantinople (1807)

If the British admiralty had not had its eyes fixed on seas and projects much nearer home, what now followed might have affected the entire fate of the Near East. On February 19, 1807, Admiral Duckworth forced the Dardanelles, under instructions to "proceed to Constantinople, and insist on the surrender of the Turkish fleet, or burn it, and bombard the town." He had caught the garrison of the forts at the Straits practically off its guard, and, aided by a strong south wind, promptly sailed past their batteries with little loss, sinking a Turkish squadron he met in the Marmora. But his forces were very weak for the capital enterprise of bearding the Ottoman lion in his very lair. He had only seven ships of the line and two frigates. There was panic in Constantinople when the English ships rode off the Isles of the Princes, but Sebastiani and his staff of French officers encouraged and aided the Turks to prepare and mount powerful artillery, while the English were cleverly delayed in their attack by sham negotiations. Duckworth presently discovered therefore that his only chance to seize Constantinople had been by surprise. That chance was over. He could not pit his wooden 74's against hundreds of guns emplaced behind granite. Fearful of being bottled up in the Marmora, he repassed the Dardanelles on March 3. This time French engineers assisted the garrisons, and the English sustained a considerable loss, including that of some of their smaller vessels.[9] The whole effect of Duckworth's raid was therefore to reduce the prestige of the British in the Levant, and to make the French temporarily all powerful at Constantinople.

Alexander I Attacks Turkey. Bessarabia Ceded to Russia (1812 A. D.)

The situation became even more complicated, however, when in June, 1807, Alexander I signed the Treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon. Nominally the French undertook to arrange for peace between their

[9] The Turks still had in position some of their old-style large caliber cannon shooting *stone* projectiles. Several English ships were struck with these 800-pound stone globes with very serious effect.

old ally, the Padishah, and their new ally, the Czar, but actually the Russians were allowed to let the situation drag on, without active hostilities, indeed, but with their grip upon Moldavia and Wallachia showing no signs of relaxing. At length the Turks came with justice to suspect the value of Napoleon's vehement professions of "friendship": although they hardly understood how by a secret article of the Treaty it was provided that if the Porte "did not comply with the private recommendations of France and Russia" all her European possessions except Roumelia and Constantinople "were to be withdrawn from the vexations of Turkish government." There were in fact serious schemes being discussed in the European courts for the complete division of all the Balkans, with "compensations" in Bosnia and Serbia being thrown to Austria to induce her to join in "the ideal proceeds of an uncommitted crime." [10]

In 1809 Russia actively renewed the war with the Sultan, nor did Napoleon greatly exert himself to prevent Alexander I from involving his forces deeply in a huge Balkan venture. The Russians were in the main steadily victorious, but by 1811 the general European situation had become such that a war between the Muscovite and the Corsican was increasingly on the horizon. Alexander therefore instructed his generals to stay their advance, and privately urged his ministers to cut their demands to a minimum in order to get a free hand against France. The British diplomats also used all their influence in pressing the Porte to make peace. On the other side Napoleon was now ready to promise Mahmud II almost anything, including the recovery of the Crimea, if the Turks would only continue the war. As a matter of fact, if the Sultan had realized that Alexander was about to need every soldier and every kopeck to turn back the great French invasion, the Ottoman might actually have named his own terms, but the courage of the Sultan had been shaken by many defeats, and he had become embittered by French duplicity. In the very nick of time, therefore, for Russia, was signed the Treaty of Bucharest (1812), ceding to the Czar the Roumanian territory of Bessarabia up to the Pruth, although restoring Moldavia and Wallachia to the suzerainty of

[10] Keenly did Napoleon realize the value of the Turkish capital. When Alexander at Tilsit proposed that Russia might possess it, the Corsican indignantly replied—*"Constantinople! never! for it is the Empire of the World!"*—Although he did not proclaim his purpose, there seems little doubt that if his career had run unchecked the imperial Tricoleur would presently have replaced the Crescent beside the Bosphorus.

the Porte. So were released those armies which were to chase back Napoleon on his great winter retreat from Moscow.

The Treaty of Bucharest soon appeared to be so fatal a blunder to the Ottomans that Mahmud disgraced his Grand Vizier and beheaded his too yielding plenipotentiaries. But it at least secured a modicum of peace to his Empire during those bloody years when the Napoleonic adventure was ending. The Congress of Vienna, while it could recarve most of the rest of Europe, could hardly undertake to parcel out the territories of a neutral state.[11] The fall of Napoleon apparently left Alexander I, however, in the position of dominator of Europe; and had this Czar been less under the influence of Metternich with the latter's ideas of "legitimacy" and of the need of upholding even the Ottomans as a "legitimate government," the ambitious projects dropped in 1812 might have been speedily revived. As it was, Mahmud felt it wise to grant a kind of semi-independence to the Serbian rebels (see p. 290) lest they invoke a Russian protector; and the entire situation in the Levant was obviously so precarious that from 1815 to 1821 about all the main energy of Western diplomacy seemed concentrated upon preventing the rise of any acute question which could justify the Czar in a new attack on the Sultan. Alexander was indeed very intent during those years upon strengthening his "Holy Alliance." He was also increasingly under the tutelage of Metternich whose ruling maxim, "touch not Mine anointed," applied to every old-line despot including the Padishah. In 1821, nevertheless, there occurred an event which shook the diplomats out of their complacency and set the entire Levant by the ears. Greece revolted against her infidel masters.

[11] Britain was made a Levantine power by the Congress of Vienna, when to her was rewarded the "protection" of the *Ionian Isles* (Corfu, etc.), which had been part of the relics of the old Venetian dominions. The British on the whole had very little interest in these outposts of the Near East, and, as will be seen, ceded them to independent Greece in 1864 (see p. 000).

CHAPTER XXVI

THE GENESIS OF SERBIAN AND GREEK INDEPENDENCE (1804-1830)

Serbia under the Ottoman Yoke

Thirty years of the Nineteenth Century had not run ere there befell a new form of catastrophe to the Ottoman Empire. Not merely were the armies of the Padishah defeated and provinces torn away by neighboring Christian monarchies, but two peoples among the helpless Rayahs rose in revolt. In the first case, Serbia, the immediate result for the rebels was autonomy and semi-independence. In the second case, Greece, an independent kingdom was established outright.

For generations the South Slavs, save in the invincible "Black Mountain," seemed to have forgotten the spacious days of Stephen Dushan when Serbia was overshadowing the entire Balkan Peninsula. They were humble Rayahs of the Ottomans. Over their territories crossed and recrossed the hostile armies in the wars with Hungary and Austria. Often Serbia (the largest region inhabited by the South Slavs) had been devastated by war. The Serbs had been oppressed politically by the Turks, and ecclesiastically by the Greeks of the Phanar. In their villages they were indeed allowed to have their petty magnates, the *knezes*, who were mainly useful in assisting the Turkish tax-gatherers, but the leveling hand of despotism had destroyed any real Christian aristocracy. The most honorable calling was apparently that of "pig-trader"—something natural enough where the great acorn forests provided the chief source of wealth. For centuries these unhappy peasants had groveled helplessly before their ikon saints and prayed for the deliverance by heaven.[1] Then suddenly in 1804 came an uprising

[1] In fairness it should be said that in 1789-1790, while Austria was assisting Russia in her war with the Turks, the Austrians invaded Serbia and the natives experienced for a short time the sweets of Christian rule. Serbian regiments assisted the Austrian troops. When Austria (1791) made peace and rather ignominiously left the Serbs in the lurch, the Turks complained of the new spirit of unruliness among their restored subjects. "Neighbors," their officials questioned the Austrians, "what have you made of our Rayahs?"

directed at first, curiously enough, not against the Sultan, but those flaunting his authority. To a large extent Serbia delivered herself.

To omit details unessential in an outline narrative, the main stages in the achievement of Serbian autonomy can be stated as these:

The First Revolt of the Serbs under Kara George (1804-1812 A. D.)

I. In the increasing disorders of the Empire, the large force of Janissaries quartered in Belgrade and other Serbian towns became completely unruly. Their leaders, the "Dahis," not merely plundered the Rayahs but also the Moslem Spahis—the great local landowners. When the Dahis learned that the Serbs intended to appeal directly to the Sultan against their misdeeds they undertook a systematic vengeance on the Christian *knezes* who had dared to protest in behalf of their people. Early in 1804 seventy-two of these Serbian notables were slaughtered in cold blood. Selim III abominated the Janissaries (who presently destroyed him) and he now gave direct encouragement to the Rayahs to rise in arms against their oppressors who were adding to their sins by openly defying the imperial authority.

II. The Serbians found in Kara George ("Black George") an ideal leader for a host of desperate irregulars. He had been a trader in swine. During an Austrian invasion (1789-1790) he had served in the Hapsburg forces. Swift to wrath and swift to strike this "supreme ruler" organized the Rayahs into something like an efficient army, and by drastic methods enforced a kind of discipline.[2] The Serbians promptly succeeded in breaking the power of the Janissaries and their adherents. The "Dahis" were driven into the citadel of Belgrade, blockaded, seized by the Serbs and put to death. The original object of the insurrection had been entirely accomplished ere 1805 was over. The Sultan and his adherents now expected Kara George and his followers to disband quietly and to resume their lives as peaceful pig-raisers.

III. But this uprising and this victory had evoked a national feeling and evolved a national power. Russia was known to the Serbs as a Christian Empire likely to give them countenance. A

[2] Kara George shot his own father to prevent him from falling into the power of the enemy. He hanged his own brother when he lived licentiously and presumed on family influence to protect him. When offered the command he long resisted, saying, "I cannot stop to take counsel. I shall be inclined to kill at once."

Serbian deputation visited the court of the Czar. Alexander I cautiously advised them to present this further request at Constantinople—promising to use his influence to get for them a considerate hearing. The Serbians therefore directly petitioned the Porte for a remission of the arrears of tribute, but more particularly (and here was a matter which touched the Ottoman interests to the quick) that Christian troops and not Turkish should occupy the fortresses in the Serbian districts. This practically implied the maintenance of some kind of a Christian armed state. After a year of futile negotiations, Selim III therefore declared a "Holy War" on these disobedient Rayahs who had used the Padishahs' necessities and indulgence merely to push rebellious projects.

IV. In 1806 the Ottoman armies invaded Serbia. Kara George flung them back. The critical battle was at Michar near the Save when with 7000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and two cannon "made of the trunks of cherry trees," he brought to confusion 30,000 Turks. On December 27, 1806, the Ottoman garrison of the great barrier fortress of Belgrade capitulated. The whole of Serbia proper now seemed cleared of the Infidel.

V. What of course made the Serbian struggle for freedom temporarily so successful was the fact that now the Porte was in deadly struggle with Russia. Mahmud II, who had come to the throne, was needing all his forces to prevent Muscovite advance on Constantinople. The Serbs indeed appealed for aid to all three of the Continental powers, Austria, France and Russia. From the first two they gained nothing. It did not suit Hapsburg or Napoleonic policy just then to enter into new broils with the Porte. But Alexander I being at open war with the Ottomans, as well as finding the whole Serbian movement greatly to Russian advantage, made a regular alliance with Kara George and sent armed detachments that gave the Serbs material assistance against such forces as Mahmud II could spare to use against them. So the insurgents continued to defy the Sultan until 1812, when Russia was forced to make her hasty peace with Turkey (see p. 285) in order to meet the great French invasion: although in the Treaty of Bucharest, Article XII did stipulate that the Serbs should receive a "complete amnesty," should enjoy considerable local autonomy, and should collect their own taxes according to a reasonable agreement between themselves and the Sultan. Alexander I thus left the Serbs somewhat shabbily

in the lurch, though able to excuse himself by the plea of unwelcome necessity.

Turkish Reconquest of Serbia. Successful Uprising of Milosh Obrenovich

VI. The moment the Russians were fully engaged with Napoleon, the Turks forgot all stipulations in favor of "rebellious Giaours." In 1813 three powerful Ottoman armies penetrated Serbia. The insurgents were crushed by numbers. Kara George at length despaired of the national cause and fled into Hungary and most of his followers submitted. Then followed a new proclamation to the world that the tender mercies of the Ottomans were cruel. The conquerors slew with the sword, flung infants into boiling water, and impaled men and women by hundreds. As wrote a Serbian historian, Yakchitch, "peace was reëstablished, but it was the peace of the tomb." For more than a year a reign of terror prevailed, every person who had had part in the insurrection being hunted down. Before one of the gates of Belgrade, says a writer of 1815, "on either side of the road are sixty to seventy impaled Serbs, their bodies are gnawed by the dogs wherever the latter can reach them." [3]

VII. Such "frightfulness" provoked a new uprising. Upon the scene came one Milosh Obrenovich, a swineherd who had taken a prominent part in the first insurrection. The revolt burst upon the Turks when they were off their guard, and the Ottomans were again partially driven from the land. It was now 1815 and Waterloo had just been fought. The last thing Mahmud II desired was to give the Czar (now disengaged from Napoleon) an excellent excuse for intervention in the Balkans. The result was that Mahmud brought himself to negotiate with Milosh. The Serbs were to receive "semi-autonomy." A pasha was still to remain in their country and Turkish garrisons in Belgrade and sundry other strongholds, but Milosh was recognized and invested as the *"Kneze"* or "Supreme Chief of the Serbians," supposedly elected by his people and with twelve lesser *Knezes,* also elected, as his council. This Serbian government was to manage the country, and administer justice and the finances, paying part of the taxes over to the Sultan.

Milosh's position was still very difficult. The country he ruled

[3] Such deeds and the abiding memory of the same, sufficiently account for the "grim raw morals" and methods of the modern Balkan nations. The Turk was a bad master, and was still worse as a pedagogue in the school of peaceful self-government and self-restrained patriotism.

was only a minor fraction of the South Slavic lands. A new war with Turkey might ruin everything. He had continually to fear the enmity of the partisans of the hero of the original uprising,—Kara George. Milosh, however, was no man for tender practices in a perilous situation. When in 1817 Kara George returned from exile, to stir up a movement for the complete expulsion of the Turks, Milosh deliberately induced the local pasha to order him "to send Kara George's head to Belgrade"—an order promptly executed by one of the new prince's underlings.[4] By methods like these Milosh gradually rendered himself without a rival in what was a very small, poor and barbaric state. In 1830, staggering under another defeat by Russia, the Porte was at length constrained to recognize Milosh as "hereditary prince," with very full powers of autonomy, while the Turkish influence was limited to a few garrisons. Thus was born as a self-governing, if not as a formally independent country, the modern nation of Serbia. It had a long and painful road to travel until as "Jugo-Slavia" it could in 1918 gather nearly all the South Slavs under a single government.

Revival of Greek Nationality

The Serbs had thus taken their first steps in self-government before their fellows in oppression, the Greeks, were able to begin their battle to become a free nation.

The Greeks had less to complain of at the hands of the Turks than the Serbs. It has been seen how the Sultan left them the control of the Church among many of the Christian races of the Empire. The Greeks, too, were not confined to be pig-raisers. They grew rich through commerce, and especially after 1791, when the Christian naval powers were at war, the Turkish standard (under which the Greeks had to sail) was about the only neutral flag in the Mediterranean. This brought to them no small gain. About 1815 these enterprising subjects of the Porte claimed to possess 600 merchant vessels and 30,000 excellent sailors. At Odessa, Moscow, Vienna, Marseilles, Paris and London there were by this time colonies of Greek merchants, wealthy, ambitious, absorbing Western ideas and theories, and becoming increasingly conscious that they were the apparent heirs of a great national

[4] This deed of course created a blood feud between the Obrenoviches and the Kara-Georgeviches which ran as a heritage of evil all through Serbian history and culminated in the murder of Alexander I, the last Obrenovich, in 1903.

tradition and cultural heritage. The Greeks were thus indeed less oppressed than the other Rayahs, but they were becoming far more keenly aware of their oppression, and their geographical situation made a revolt against the Ottomans considerably less hazardous

than for the Serbs or Bulgarians. Greece was a maritime country, so she could reach out for succor to all the world.

This is no place wherein to trace the first stirrings of that new nationalism, which the modern Greeks discovered within themselves in common with so many other races downtrodden in the nineteenth century. About half the Greek nation lived outside of their special peninsula and its neighboring islands. Within Greece Proper there were settled very many Slavs and Albanians, but these as a rule had been caught by the Greek language, and by the ven-

erable traditions of a glorious day. They too baptized their sons "Odysseus" and "Epaminondas," and around their hearth-fires told the story of Marathon. The Greek tongue had been barbarized and corrupted during the long centuries of oppression. Thanks now largely to the great merchants, schools were presently founded, especially at Constantinople and Corfu, for the instruction of Greek youth in their own ancient literature. The result was that "Modern Greek" began to recover its vigor and purity. A practical compromise was discovered between the vulgar tongue and the language of Plato. This was a great step towards a national revival.

In Greece Proper the Turks had never taken root. The Moslem population was small. There was something like a Christian aristocracy (the *Primates*) that understood the methods of local self-government.[5] They were, however, none too well loved by many of the maritime folk, or by the "Klephts"—half outlaws through Turkish oppression, half ordinary brigands on the mountains, living by discreet plunder. On the whole therefore the Greeks had been less disarmed than any other of the Rayah peoples.[6] They had keener national traditions and members of their race traveled more in the West and caught the spirit of the French Revolution. In 1787 a poet, Rhigas, exiled in Vienna, composed a national hymn, "The Greek Marseillaise"—"Rise, sons of the Hellas, the time of deliverance is nigh." The Austrian police, ever truckling to tyrants, handed him over to the Pasha of Belgrade, who promptly drowned him in the Danube. "I have sowed the seed," were his last words. "The day will come when my people will reap the harvest!"

The First Period of the Greek Revolt (1821-1825)

By 1815 many Greeks had convinced themselves that that very idealistic and unstable potentate Alexander I was ready to come to their aid, if once they began a strong movement for independence. A secret association with wide ramifications was organized, the "Friendly Society," avowedly merely for the mutual assistance of the members ("One for all, and all for each," ran the motto) but

[5] Some parts of Greece had pretty complete autonomy. The "Nautical Isles" in the Argolic Gulf,—Hydra, Spezzia and Psara, were practically small republics governed by their "primates," and owing the Turks little service save the sending of presents to the heads of the Sultan's navy. The inhabitants of Hydra (the most populous isle) were really Albanians, but were caught by the Greek spirit and sympathies.

[6] In theory the Greek merchant ships were disarmed, but by fictitious sales to harmless Ottomans, the Greeks had been able to retain the use of their vessels, yet often equipped them with quite formidable batteries.

with the real object in view pretty clearly in the liberation of Greece. Not merely did many Greeks throughout the Turkish Empire join the organization, but among the members were Count Capo d'Istria, a native of Corfu, who had actually become a minister of Czar Alexander, and Prince Alexander Ypsilanti who had become major general in the Russian service. Elaborate intrigues were conducted. Great hopes were formed of Russian assistance. It was also foolishly imagined that if a filibustering expedition were led out of Russia into the Roumanian principalities, the non-Greek people of the latter would rise immediately. Accordingly, in March, 1821, the mine was sprung. As in the case of Serbia, the stages of the Greek uprising must be stated very succinctly:

I. Ypsilanti led a small Greek band into Roumania and proclaimed general resistance to the Ottoman. Few or none of the Roumanians joined him and Ypsilanti soon lost his nerve. He fled into Austria, where the Metternich flung him into prison. His deserted followers fought gallantly but were speedily overpowered by the Turks. So ended an ill-conceived and futile attempt to secure the liberty of Greece by provoking an uprising in distant Roumania.

II. Almost simultaneously, however, with Ypsilanti's expedition in the north the Greeks themselves rose against the oppressor and with much greater success. The Turkish garrisons in the Morea and central Greece were small, isolated and ill-commanded. By seizing the mountain passes the insurgents halted nearly all the attempts of the pashas to throw troops into the country. The Greek merchant ships speedily became transformed into armed corvettes, admirably manned and commanded. *"Not a Turk shall remain in the Morea,"* rang a popular song—which was translated into action by ruthless massacres whenever the Greeks gained the upperhand over their old despots. At Tripolitza, the capital of the Morea, 12,000 Moslems were slain in cold blood. Soon nearly all of Greece proper and many of the islands were clear of the Ottomans and on January 13, 1822, a "National Assembly" met in the ancient open air theater at Epidaurus, and proclaimed the independence of the Greek nation.

III. The Sultan of course answered massacre with massacre. At Constantinople the Greek patriarch Gregorios, was hanged at the doors of his cathedral in his pontifical robes. The Captain-

Pasha landed a large force on the flourishing island of the Chios (predominantly Greek) and slaughtered, outraged and haled away captives in a manner hideous and famous until the "Massacre of Chios" was forgotten nigh a hundred years later in the greater "Massacres of Armenia"; 23,000 Chians were slain; 47,000 sold into slavery (1822). But this deed could not save the Turkish land armies from defeat at the hands of such partisan leaders as Bozzaris, nor from repeated disasters at sea where the nimble Greek mariners found full play for their native genius. Americans who cherish the memory of Decatur at Tripoli, or of Cushing and the "Albemarle," will not withhold their meed of praise for Constantine Kanaris, who in June, 1822, "with two brigs fitted as fireships and thirty-six men," entered the roads of Chios where the Turks, off guard and riotous, were celebrating the feast of Bairam, sent his craft alongside the tall flagship of the Captain-Pasha, fired the trains, made good his escape and blew the Ottoman admiral (chief author of the massacre) with 2000 fellow Moslems to a deserved Gehenna. By deeds like these the Turkish attack upon central and southern Greece was for the nonce brought to a stand-still.

IV. Unfortunately it was easier for the Greeks to expel the Turks than to organize any decent government to resist an inevitable and more formidable attempt at a reconquest. Between the Greek "Primates" and the "Klephts," the aristocratic elements and the partisan chiefs, there was soon not merely coldness but civil war. Some islands were at open hostility with other islands. There lacked anything resembling an efficient central authority to oppose the Sultan. Under these circumstances that the pashas of Mahmud II were unable to crush the revolt was a startling testimony to Ottoman weakness.

The Egyptian Intervention in Greece (1825-1827 A. D.)

V. At last despairing of subduing the rebels by ordinary means Mahmud reluctantly invited his nominal vassal, the great Pasha of Egypt, Mehemet-Ali, to undertake to conquer the insurgents. The latter did so, against large promises (1825). He sent his son Ibrahim (a very able general) across to Greece with a powerful fleet and 17,000 Egyptians well trained in the European manner. Soon the Greeks were entirely on the defensive. The Egyptians

seized one point after another on the Morea. They presently captured, after a very brave defense, Missolonghi, the principal city of Northwestern Greece (1826). The next year the Turks recovered Athens. A large part of the entire country had now been subdued, and the whole Hellenic cause would have collapsed, but for the long delayed intervention of the Christian powers.

VI. When the Greeks first revolted, they had received anything but comfort from the European monarchies. Metternich was their consistent foe. "It matters not much," he wrote brutally in 1821, "if over there beyond our frontiers three or four hundred thousand people get hung, strangled or impaled." At the diplomatic Congress of Laybach the Greek deputies were not even admitted to a hearing. But presently a change came for the better. Czar Nicholas I was a pitiless autocrat, but he was not dominated by Metternich, did not fear a war with Turkey, and was very anxious to turn the Greek quarrel to Russian advantage. France and England from the outset were desirous of preventing any struggle in the East from becoming a pretext for allowing Russia to wreck the whole Ottoman Empire. On the other hand the French and English ministers (especially Canning, the British foreign minister) were becoming personally very sympathetic with the Greek cause. As a result the diplomatic situation slowly turned against Mahmud II.

The "Philhellenes." European Intervention. Battle of Navarino (1827 A. D.)

VII. What really forced the hands of the Great Powers were the activities of the "Philhellenes." The sorrows of Greece were hardly greater than those of other Rayah peoples, but it was one thing to cry out in the name of obscure Serbia, another to evoke the memories of Salamis. Every classical student in Europe was practically compelled to lend the weight of his influence in behalf of the Greeks. A considerable "second-class king," Louis I of Bavaria, gave them open countenance. Very distinguished French authors such as Chateaubriand used their pens in their behalf. Not a few British, French, and Italian military adventurers of the worthier kind joined the Greek army and navy. Above all Lord Byron (then the most prominent literary character in Europe) went to Greece and died in 1824 at Missolonghi, while striving valiantly to get Hellenic leaders to forget their miserable differences. Thanks to the Philhel-

lenes the Greeks were thus able to float considerable loans in Paris and London. Not a little money was also raised as outright gifts for the Hellenic cause.[7] The pressure in short upon the French and British governments became irresistible, and they agreed on concerted action with Russia at the very moment that Ibrahim the Egyptian seemed about to complete the reconquest of Greece.

VIII. The game now passed from the faltering hands of the diplomats to the more honest grasp of sailors. The British admiral in the Levant, Codrington, frankly confessed himself unable to understand his remarkable orders,—to stop the warfare of the Turks and Egyptians against the Greeks and yet prevent his measures from "degenerating into hostilities." He speedily decided to remember the first part of his directions and perhaps to forget the second. In October the allied British, French and Russian squadron entered the Bay of Navarino (ancient Pylos) in the Morea. Here lay Ibrahim's fleet, and from this point of vantage his men were conducting a pitiless ravaging of the country. Upon their ships the Western sailors shook their fists as they saw "continual clouds of fire and smoke arising [all over the mainland] bearing a frightful testimony to the devastation that was going on." The admirals accordingly served notice on Ibrahim of their purpose "to put a stop to atrocities which exceeded all that hitherto taken place."

The arrogant pasha, however, was determined to defy the Giaours to do their worst. He had three ships of the line, fifteen frigates, and about sixty smaller craft. The allies had indeed eleven ships of the line and ten frigates, but very few smaller vessels. The Moslems would not have been entirely outmatched if their crews had been equal in skill to their opponents; nevertheless it was sheer madness to provoke the allies, especially as their admirals had been ordered to refrain from "offensive" action. On October 20, however, an Egyptian ship wantonly fired on a boat's crew of the British

[7] America had an honorable share in this Philhellenic movement. Samuel Gridley Howe, of Boston, later distinguished by his work for the insane and blind, in his younger years labored and wrought in Greece, and then raised $60,000 (a large sum for those times) in America for the cause of independence. He established at Ægina a successful relief depot for the refugees.

Perhaps not many American schoolboys to-day declaim the verses of Fitz-Greene Halleck, telling how "At midnight . . . when Bozzaris cheered his band." But the vivid lines recall a decade when the Greek struggle for independence seemed very real, and was followed with intense interest throughout the freedom-loving world.

The name of the town of *Ypsilanti*, Michigan, commemorates the fact that in the 1820's the founders of a young western community felt their hearts go out in the struggle of the Hellenes and their leaders against the Turk.

frigate *Dartmouth,* and the latter promptly returned a "defensive fire," followed by the general broadsides of all her consorts. The allies were anchored close to the Turkish-Egyptians, and the experienced Western gunners rejoiced to "defend themselves" by plying their 32-pounders in a manner avenging of much Christian blood. When the sun sunk that night, on board the Allied vessels there had been considerable losses but the Turko-Egyptian fleet "had disappeared, and the Bay of Navarino was covered by their wrecks." [8]

Russo-Turkish War. Treaty of Adrianople. Greek Independence Recognized (1829 A. D.)

IX. France and England had hoped for some compromise which would leave the Sultan as at least the nominal suzerain of Greece, and avoid excuses for Russian intervention. The Duke of Wellington, speaking as Prime Minister, described the Battle of Navarino as an "untoward event." But Mahmud II refused any accommodation. He actually talked of an "indemnity" for the harm done him in the Morea. The other powers had therefore no pretext for opposing Nicholas I when he declared war on the Sultan as the only means of ending an impossible situation (1828).

In this war of 1828-1829, as in their other encounters, the Turks did better than expected when standing on the defense, while the Russians had great trouble in bringing up their armies. The 1828 campaign did little more than get the Czar's troops fairly across the Danube. But in 1829 a bold and clever general, Diebitch, pushed over the Balkans and, to the utter dismay of the Turks, seized Adrianople. His army in fact was perilously small, barely 20,000, and Mahmud might well have defied him; but Constantinople was in a panic, and all the foreign diplomats urged the Sultan to make peace "before it was too late." Mahmud, therefore, in despair, signed the Treaty of Adrianople (September 14, 1829). By this the Turks were obliged to recognize Greece as an independent kingdom, under the guarantee of the "Three Powers" (Britain, France, and Russia). They also had to cede to the Czar the mouth of the Danube, to grant the autonomy of Serbia, and give up prac-

[8] It is worth noticing that Navarino, the last important battle between sailing ships, was not far from Lepanto, the scene of the last great galley battle (see p. 230). The first important action in which steamers participated was also in the Levant, off Sinope in the Black Sea in 1853 (see p. 316).

tically all claims to suzerainty over Moldavia and Wallachia except to "invest" their princes, and receive a moderate tribute. The Roumanian lands in fact seemed to pass completely under Russian "protection." Thus with this treaty, for a little while "peace" returned officially at least to the afflicted Near East.

So was founded the independent kingdom of modern Greece. It was an unhappy enough little country. The population was only 750,000. The great Powers had ungenerously left it with very narrow boundaries. Crete, and nearly all the greater Ægean islands, including Chios, though predominantly Greek in population, were still under the Turks, who also held fast to Epirus and Thessaly. The whole land had been grievously devastated. There were few civil institutions. The national treasury was hardly worth pillaging. Several petty civil wars were raging; and many more brisk local feuds. Count Capo d'Istria, who undertook to act at first as a kind of Regent in the country, was a well-intentioned man but harsh and stubborn. In 1831 he was murdered for refusing to release a malcontent. The Greeks in fact were in a state of economic and political prostration, when in 1833 there arrived their new king, Otho, son of the King of Bavaria, selected by the protecting powers to attempt to make this youngest of monarchies into a self-respecting, prosperous state. It was to be three quarters of a century before a Venizelos could enable Modern Greece to end her period of probation and to lift her head among the more upstanding nations.

CHAPTER XXVII

MAHMUD II AND MEHEMET ALI. THE "EASTERN QUESTION"

Mahmud II (1808-1839 A. D.), His Attempts at Reform and His Failures

The oft-mentioned Sultan during the Greek War of Independence was Mahmud II (1808-1839). Whatever his sins, and they were many, he was at least no harem sluggard.[1] He had a reasonably clear apprehension of the ills that were menacing the life of his Empire. With energy and courage, if not with equal wisdom and moderation, he fought against them. He seems to have been deeply impressed by the example of Peter the Great in Russia. Many of the precepts and traditions of Islam sat lightly upon him. He drank wine and liked to see his high officers tipsy. He tried to modernize the costume of his courtiers. Some of his "reforms" bordered on the comic, as when in 1837 he issued a decree regulating the length of mustaches and ordering that the beards of his subjects "should not extend over an inch from the chin." More to the point were his efforts to give to Turkey a Europeanized administration and military system. If a series of well-intentioned ordinances could have made Ottoman administration efficient and swept away many long-standing abuses, Mahmud would have been a great reformer—breaking up the semi-feudal Turkish aristocracy of placeholders, filling the treasury while lightening the tax burdens, and replacing the clumsy divan with a group of competent ministers really responsible to the monarch.

He largely failed in all of this because of the sheer impossibility

[1] A curious and interesting tale about Mahmud was that his mother is sometimes alleged to have been a French woman, Aimée Dubuc de Rivery, native of Martinique in the West Indies, the original home of the Empress Josephine. When a girl, while returning to France her vessel was taken by Algerian pirates. She was purchased by the Dey of Algiers and sent as a present to his suzerain, Sultan Abdul Hamid I. By him she became the mother of Mahmud II. She spent her later days in luxurious retirement at Constantinople, and probably infused her imperial son with not a few ideas which passed as "liberal" among Europeans, and "dangerous" among his subjects. It is said that Mahmud could speak good French and read French books.

of finding Ottomans of sufficient probity, intelligence, and education to become his office-holders and work under anything like a Europeanized system. Moslems would not obey Christians, whether Rayahs of the Empire or Westerners in the Sultan's pay. The ulemas and other religio-legal elements who were outraged by Mahmud's innovations taught the people to pray to Allah for deliverance from the "Giaour Sultan";[2] and the latter's schemes of reform were wrecked on that obstacle which has often made the philanthropist's lot in the Orient so dreary—the passive resistance of the bulk of the population. Mahmud's reign therefore did not arrest the constant decay of the Turkish Empire.

The Overthrow of the Janissaries (1826). Innovations in the Army

The one real achievement of this sultan was the overthrow of the Janissaries. That pampered corps had become simply a terror to its miscalled "masters." Many a time had the guardsmen stormed the Seraglio palace, only to be propitiated by exposing to their gaze the head of some unpopular vizier, who had merely done the Sultan's bidding. Repeatedly also had they deposed sultans themselves (such as the well-intentioned Selim III) and sent them to the bowstring. They had become useless in foreign warfare, but were a standing scourge alike to populace and government in Constantinople. Mahmud justly hated them, but for his own safety he long dissembled. Then in 1826 he ordered certain groups of Janissaries detached to form a new army division to be drilled in the European discipline. Instantly the Janissaries rose in fury; but Mahmud had long foreseen their act, had mobilized loyal troops near Constantinople, and especially he had on hand an efficient corps of artillery.

At the news of the mutiny the Sultan boldly unfurled the "Sacred Standard of the Prophet" and called on all true Moslems to rally around their Padishah. The populace of Constantinople hated the swaggering guardsmen and joined the loyal troops. The Janissaries rushed along the narrow streets towards the palace, but were mowed down with grape-shot. They were then driven back to the old

[2] Mahmud had a very short method of dealing with such enthusiasts as dared to brave him too openly. Once a dervish who passed for a "saint" seized his bridle as the Sultan rode from Stamboul over the bridge to Galata. "Giaour Padishah, you are ruining Islam!" was his cry. "He is a mad-man, your Majesty," declared the imperial officers. "Not mad," shouted the dervish; "Allah speaks through me and has promised me the crown of martyrdom if I speak truly to you." "Very well," responded the monarch, drily. "Give the good man his crown of glory. Hang him!"

Hippodrome, and finally after heavy losses barricaded themselves in their barracks. Here Mahmud's artillery played upon them until nearly all were destroyed. In the other cities of the Empire the Janissaries that refused to disband instantly were overpowered and slain, and by a triumphant decree the famous corps was forever abolished.[3]

The annihilation of the Janissaries was a great relief to Mahmud, but to replace them with an efficient army of the Western type was beyond his ability. He did indeed gather some 70,000 men in the 1830's and give them a European organization; but a young Prussian officer who was temporarily in Turkish service had no illusions as to their value. Wrote that Von Moltke who later became a great captain: "The reform [of the Ottomans] consisted chiefly in externals, names and trappings. The army was built on the European plan, with Russian tunics, a French code, Belgian guns, Turkish turbans, Hungarian saddles, English sabres, drill sergeants of every nation . . . and [constituted a force] in which the leaders were recruits and the recruits were enemies of the day before." [4] Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the new army proved to its creator to be only a snare and a delusion. Mahmud sorrowed over the tearing away of Greece and the defeat by Russia, but his greatest bitterness came from the deeds of a nominal "subject" and official, a pasha of Egypt.

Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt (1808-1849). His Rise to Power

Mehemet-Ali was an Albanian by descent, born in 1769 in the Macedonian coast-town of Kavala. His first calling was that of tobacco-trader. In 1798 he was sent as an officer in the *bashi-bazouks* (irregulars) to serve against Napoleon in Egypt. In the subsequent wars in Egypt and Syria he speedily showed himself adroit, valorous and unscrupulous, and won constant promotion. In 1808 he was named by the Sultan as Pasha of Egypt, the largest

[3] The Janissaries were hunted down pitilessly all over Constantinople. Many hid in cellars and in the great cisterns and only succumbed after a desperate fight. The whole number slain in the capital is estimated at 10,000 up to 20,000. "Such of the corpses as were not burned in the fires which blazed in all directions, were cast into the sea and for many months fish in Constantinople were not eatable." This deed was followed up by the abolition of certain of the most seditious of the orders of Dervishes.

[4] Moltke in his Turkish memoirs sets forth clearly why "reforms" in Turkey were nigh helpless, when among the Ottomans merely ability to read and write made a man pass for a "scholar," and when many of the highest dignitaries "could not believe that the earth was round."

pashalik in the Empire, and, owing to its remoteness from Constantinople, the one least under easy control by the Porte.

The new viceroy was no ordinary Levantine adventurer. He realized the superiority of the Europeans in many respects, and particularly was he an enthusiastic admirer of the French. Their officers and engineers were speedily in his pay, and aided him to create an army and navy which far surpassed in effectiveness those of his lord, the Padishah. In 1811, by a piece of utter treachery, he entrapped about all the Memluk nobles of Egypt (a most unruly aristocracy) and ended them in a single massacre. After that he ruled "the Old House of Bondage" with about as absolute an authority as that of a Rameses II. His new style armies soon overthrew the Wahabite fanatics in Arabia and gave him control of the Holy cities, Mecca and Medina. Other armies penetrated up the Nile as far as Khartoum (1823). Very soon after this, Mahmud, his "master," was forced to summon him to help to conquer the Greeks (see p. 295). As has been seen, the great pasha sent his very able son, Ibrahim, to the Morea with a large armament. It was not the fault of the Egyptian leaders if they succumbed to the fleets of the Great Powers at Navarino. Greece was not subdued, but Mehemet-Ali had made great sacrifices in Mahmud's quarrel and now he claimed eagerly all the promised rewards.

First War Between Mehemet-Ali and Mahmud II (1831-1833 A. D.)

By 1831 this Egyptian viceroy, swollen too great for any ordinary subject, and the Sultan were completely distrustful of one another. Mahmud had come to hate Mehemet-Ali as "a disobedient slave," with a deadly hatred, exceeding that which he bore Russia. The pasha in turn, besides dreaming great things for himself, became fearful when he saw how Mahmud was dealing with various other unruly governors. Freed now from his Greek and Russian wars, the Sultan had been able to overcome such malcontents as Hussein of Bosnia, and Mustafa of Scutari; and Mehemet-Ali had no desire to have his own head carried in a basket to Stamboul. The result was that the Egyptian deliberately picked a quarrel with the Pasha of Acre (Mahmud's faithful official) and defied the Sultan to come to his rescue. At Constantinople Mahmud was now sorely divided between his hatred of the Christians and his hatred of Mehemet-Ali.

Pious Moslems urged him to forget his pride, compound with the rebel and not bring comfort to the common enemies of Islam. But the Sultan could not bring himself to negotiate. A solemn decree of outlawry was launched against the offending pasha; and the imperial armies were ordered against him.

In a very short war Ibrahim, Mehemet's son, leading his formidable armies, showed his military superiority. The Turks were repeatedly defeated, and finally decisively so near Iconium. All Syria was lost to Mahmud. The Egyptians pushed their advance-guard onward to Brusa. There seemed no military obstacle to keep Ibrahim from entering Constantinople, in which case (considering his unpopularity) Mahmud's fate was sealed.

Driven to desperation, the unhappy Sultan now cried aloud to his "good brother," the Czar. Nicholas I responded to his appeal with obvious satisfaction. A Russian fleet sailed into the Bosphorus and 15,000 Muscovite soldiers landed on its shores. This overwhelming act of "protection" sent shivers down the spines of every British, French and Austrian diplomat. The Turkish Empire seemed about to fall to pieces, and without even the trouble of a serious war Russia would ensconce herself at Constantinople! Every pound of diplomatic pressure therefore was exerted to induce Mahmud to compound with his overgrown vassal, and in great sorrow the stubborn Padishah at length gave way. He ceded to Mehemet-Ali the government of Syria and the Cilician district of Adana (1833). The Egyptian was now in possession of a large part of the Ottoman dominions, and controlled an army and fleet far superior to that of the Turks. It even seemed as if a slight turn of events would make the real capital of the Moslem Levant shift from Constantinople to Cairo.

It is true that Mehemet-Ali protested loudly that he was only "the Sultan's servant," that the destruction of the Ottoman Empire would be an intense sorrow to him, that he was only attacking Mahmud's evil policies, ministers, etc. "The Sultan is insane," he remarked, "but Allah has given him to us for our sins." Nevertheless all the world credited the pasha with imperial designs [5] and watched his next move.

[5] If Mehemet-Ali had actually seized Constantinople, he would doubtless have respected the Sultan's nominal power as "Padishah" and "Kalif," but would have set up some such personage as a Shogun or Mayor of the Palace, to "bear the burdens" of the sovran and presently deprive him of all but titular authority. So it had been with the Turkish "Emir of Emirs" in the decadent Bagdad Kalifate. (See p. 156.)

Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (1833 A. D.). Second War Between Mehemet-Ali and the Sultan (1839-1840 A. D.)

After the signing of peace Nicholas had to withdraw his army and fleet from Constantinople, but Mahmud was in such a terrified state of mind that the Russians speedily induced him (1833) to ratify the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, a small village on the Bosphorus. Couched in terms of friendship and equality this document actually delivered the Ottomans hand and foot to the Czar. Russia pledged herself to assist the Sultan with armies if need should arise (and "need" could very easily arise whenever Russian agents chose to instigate a rebellion); while the Sultan promised that, if the Czar required aid, he would close the Dardanelles against Russia's enemies, although permitting their use to the Muscovites. The Black Sea was thus virtually rendered a Russian war-harbor, from which the Czar's navy could issue at pleasure. The Western diplomats raged but were helpless until a new situation forced Nicholas to take a reasonable attitude.

Mehemet-Ali and Mahmud were men neither of whom were likely to remain at peace for long. Ibrahim, as his father's deputy, soon provoked revolts in Syria by his tactless and arbitrary policy. In 1839, trusting foolishly to reports that his reorganized Western army was ready, and that the Viceroy's dominions were disaffected, the Sultan again declared war on a vassal who had already refused to pay tribute, and who had been sounding the Western powers as to their attitude in case he should declare himself "independent." Whereupon two months after hostilities began Ibrahim annihilated the Turkish "New Model" forces at the battle of *Nezib*. The victor gathered in 12,000 prisoners, 25,000 muskets, and 160 cannon. Mahmud II died just before the news of this last humiliation reached Constantinople. He left to the ministers of his sixteen-year-old son, Abdul-Mejid (1839-1861), a situation promising sheer ruin for the Empire, save as the Christian powers rescued it.

In this crisis British and Austrian diplomacy especially bestirred itself to "preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire" and to prevent Russia from availing herself of the recent treaty in order to intervene again and this time never to withdraw her forces. This end could only be accomplished if Mehemet-Ali were kept from splitting the Turkish dominions asunder. But the redoubtable

Egyptian had been very close to France, which power was quite willing to see him reap large rewards from his victories. For that very reason British leaders trembled at the idea of a powerful Francophile controlling the route to India. As for Nicholas I, he was not anxious for a war with England, and he realized that the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi gave Russia more than she could then hope to hold. Behind the back of the French, therefore, Russia, Britain and Austria, joined now by Prussia, entered into the Treaty of London (1840) by which these four powers undertook to force Mehemet-Ali to keep within bounds. The wrath of France was great. Thiers, Louis-Philippe's prime minister, would even have risked hostilities with Britain, but the "Citizen King" who gave him office was unwilling to enter a capital war with every prospect of having to fight a great coalition. Thiers resigned, France stomached her pride, while the other powers ordered Mehemet-Ali back into Syria, promising him generous treatment, however, if he complied promptly, although the reverse if he defied them.

Mehemet-Ali Confined to Egypt. "Straits Convention" (1841 A. D.)

For once the adventurer from Albania made a serious blunder. He greatly overestimated the power of France and her willingness to fight for him. Now he rebuffed the other powers, and too late he discovered that the French people would not enter upon a bloody struggle, mainly to settle whether Syrian peasants should pay tribute to the pasha or the Padishah. An Austro-British fleet bombarded the coast fortresses held by Ibrahim for his father in Syria, and then sailed direct to Alexandria. Confronted by this stern reality, Mehemet-Ali capitulated. He might indeed have been deprived of his dominions altogether, except for the fear of affronting France so utterly as to render a European war very probable. As it was the influence of Paris was able to keep for him and his house the *hereditary* rule of Egypt—thus practically setting off that country as an autonomous principality, paying only a limited tribute to the Porte.

Mehemet-Ali was now an old man, and his mind at length gave way. For some years Ibrahim ruled in Egypt for him without disturbing the rest of the world. The aged Albanian at last died in 1849. An "illiterate barbarian" but "courageous, cruel, astute,

full of wiles and boundlessly ambitious," Mehemet-Ali had, by his astonishing rise to power, and even as astonishing success after he became pasha, imposed himself greatly upon the thoughts of Europeans. When Egypt next troubled the Western powers, it was not to be because of the victories of her armies, but because of the weakness and bankruptcy of Mehemet-Ali's heirs and successors.

It remained for Western diplomacy to liquidate that offending treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which Nicholas I deemed it advisable to surrender. In 1841 the great powers, including France and Russia, signed the "Straits Convention," by which the waterways of Constantinople were declared closed to the warships of *all* nations. This left the Russian squadrons prisoners in the Black Sea, but Nicholas I was biding his time. The Russian statesmen were convinced that the Ottoman Empire was about to collapse, and then they would more than come to their own.

Abdul-Mejid Sultan (1839-1861 A. D.). More Futile Attempts at Reform

Rome, however, was not built in a day. The Ottoman dominions did not fall to pieces in a day, although the impending ruin of the Turkish Empire had been a favorite species of prophecy in Europe since early in the seventeenth century. Mahmud II died practically a defeated man, but there were still Turkish leaders of sufficient intelligence and capacity to understand the need of drastic reforms to save their country, and with influence enough with the well-meaning young Sultan Abdul-Mejid to get him to put them in office and then to sign the benevolent decrees which they prepared for him. The leading spirit in this group was Reschid Pasha. He had been an ambassador to England and understood the necessity of winning English and French public opinion to the Turkish side, if effective help were to be obtained against Russia. In 1839, largely at his instigation, there was promulgated the once famous "*Hatti-Sherif* of Gulhane" (one of the Sultan's palaces). A great gathering of Rayahs—Catholics, Greeks and Jews—and the European diplomatic corps witnessed its solemn promulgation. The court astrologer formally announced "the propitious hour." A salute of 101 guns boomed out. The document was read, declaring that henceforth there was to be an end to tax-farming, confiscation and monopolies, and that henceforth the Sultan would treat all his

people, Rayahs and Moslems, alike, with equal privileges and protection for all.

What followed might have been expected. The proclamation was received by the Moslems with silence and by the Christians with incredulity. When it came to translating the fine promises of the "hatti-sherif" into action the powerful "Old Turk" element throughout the Empire made bitter and bigoted opposition to anything squinting towards ending their privileges and favoring the Giaours. There were excellent financial reforms announced—and then abandoned for the lack of honest agents. Provincial councils of "notables" were set up to promote good government, and the notables promptly did their best to hinder any innovations. The Sultan did not support Reschid consistently. Repeatedly he was thrust out of power and and replaced by the pro-Russian Riza who suffered all the old abuses to flourish: and even Reschid took a very cynical view of what he could hope to accomplish. "I agree," he cried in 1846, "that our government is *bad,* but we prevent it from becoming *worse!*" Such statesmen never rescue decadent empires.

The one real accomplishment of this alleged era of reform was the reorganization of the army. At length something better became available than Mahmud's cowardly battalions. In 1843, a system of conscription was introduced by which Turkish youths were obliged to serve five years with the regulars, "*Nizams,*" and then seven years with the reserves, "*Redifs.*" No real attempt was made to enlist non-Moslems. They still continued to be disarmed taxpayers. The result was that the Sultans could not mobilize more than a fraction of the man-power of their Empire; but the fighting quality of the Turkish rank and file was still excellent. The Porte thus had again "an army of good soldiers, brave and steady, but commanded by incompetent officers"—who were often to nullify by their folly the undeniable efficiency of their men.

The period from 1841 to 1852 was, however, more or less of a respite for the afflicted Levant. There was relative prosperity and peace despite the ill-working of the government. The Turkish officials had learned a little wisdom. There was rather less extortion, and torture and confiscation disappeared—at least nominally—from their tribunals.

Czar Nicholas nevertheless refused to take seriously any suggestion that the Ethiopian could change his skin or the Ottomans transform

their Empire into a modernized, well-ordered state.[6] In 1844, when he made a visit to England, he stated frankly: "In my Cabinet there are two opinions about Turkey. One is that she is dying. The other is that she is dead already. In either case, nothing will prevent her speedy end."

So with increasing seriousness the "Eastern Question"—the problem of the fate of the moribund Turkish Empire, of an evil organism dying by inches—was preoccupying the diplomats of Europe. Probably if it had been merely a question of dividing the outlying provinces agreement could have been reached, but what of the capital? In 1842 Von Moltke had correctly written: "The partition of Turkey is a problem like the division of a diamond ring. *Who is to obtain Constantinople, the single costly stone?*"

In 1852 matters had progressed so far with the Turk that Nicholas I told the British ambassador to his court that "they ought to agree about the funeral."

[6] The Russians did little to encourage genuine reforms. It was for their interest to have Turkey plunged into such extreme disorders that they could have good excuse for a general intervention.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CRIMEAN WAR (1853-1856) AND ITS AFTERMATH

The European Powers and the Levant in 1850

This volume is in nowise a detailed study of European diplomacy in its many crises between the Congress of Vienna and the World War of 1914. So far as possible the cross currents of imperial ambition and intrigue even when they concerned the Near East will be passed over, but the salient facts of the Crimean War cannot be entirely ignored.

By 1850 it was evident that all the four Christian powers with Levantine commitments (Austria, Russia, France, and England)[1] recognized that the mere existence of the Ottoman Empire was in jeopardy, and that a rather slight shock might destroy the Turks as a nation. Generally speaking, the interests of these four powers were these:

I. *Austria* regarded herself as geographically entitled to become the heir to the European possessions of the dying Ottoman. The mere fact that she was now being threatened (since 1848) with extrusion from German affairs made her look the more carefully to her Balkan opportunities. She had no favorable opinion, however, concerning the attempts to make Serbia, Greece, etc., into competent, independent states, for these countries constituted too conspicuous examples of what her own unruly and heterogeneous peoples might accomplish by a stroke for freedom, and strong Balkan kingdoms of course would halt Austrian ambition. The Hapsburgs had their dreams of reigning in Constantinople as well as Vienna, but the fact that they did not rule over a nation but only over a human conglomerate made their Balkan policy very timid. They dared not adventure a war of conquest against the Turk. The Austrians were, however, quite able to put a brake

[1] Of course in 1850 Italy had no united existence as a nation. Prussia had few direct Oriental interests. Her statesmen were in the main concerned with standing in well with Austria's Balkan ambitions, in order to make the Hapsburgs more pliable in strictly German matters. However, they did not care to anger Russia without good reason.

upon the rival ambitions of Russia. Their military position on the flank of the Roumanian principalities, through which a Russian advance must lie, enabled them to do this effectively whenever the Czar talked of war on the Sultan yet failed to compound with the Kaiser at Vienna.

II. *Russia's* ambition was similar to Austria's, but less timid. The seizure of "Tsargrad," the city that had supplied the Mediæval Rus with Christianity and civilization, the patriarch whereof was still the titular chief of the "Orthodox" world, and the possession whereof would give Russia that maritime outlet so necessary for her economic life, seemed alike desirable and inevitable. The Russian people were genuinely anxious to deliver their fellow Orthodox from Moslem bondage. Notwithstanding their blundering despotism at home, the Czar's bureaucrats could nevertheless thrill with sincere anger at the "hideous misgovernment" of the Rayahs. Interest, religion, and humanity all blended, therefore, to make the Czar and his people the implacable foes of the Ottoman, convinced that Heaven had ordained them to be his heirs. For that very reason, however, the average Russian foreign minister gave little real support to any project for "reform" in the Turkish Empire. Their advantage lay in waiting until such extreme disorders arose that they could with good grace intervene and occupy forever "in the name of civilization," with so clear a mandate that the rival powers could not decently protest.

III. *France* had a much simpler case. Since the days of Francis I (see p. 224) she had been the Christian power in the Levant that was officially preferred by the Turks. She was the formal protector of all the "Latin" Christians in the Ottoman Empire. She still had a prestige and influence hardly second to any other government. Her Levantine commerce was great. Her statesmen, too, had vague hopes that some day part of the old French Crusaders' heritage might return to her.[2] She was again in 1850 the proud "First Power" of Europe. Any great change in Turkey, save one to the direct advantage of France, would impair her moral position. She was therefore officially devoted to "the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire" though not at all unwilling to support such Francophil malcontents as Mehemet-Ali.

[2] Hopes that were measurably realized in 1918-1921 when the French acquired control of Northern Syria.

IV. *England* possessed a Levantine trade which she was loath to see compromised, but her real anxieties as to the Near East revolved around two points: (1) the fear lest by seizing Constantinople and the lands adjacent Russia might acquire a general potency so terrific as to disturb that "Balance of Power" in Europe which Britain had fought several great wars to maintain;[3] (2) a more specific dread lest a Muscovite master of Constantinople would possess the infallible key to India, with a consequent undoing of all that Britain held dear in the Far East. The harshly autocratic policy of Nicholas I also made British liberals ready to believe the worst of his foreign ambitions. This apparent desirability of checking Russia in the Levant induced British statesmen quite willfully to close their eyes to the iniquities of Ottoman rule, and to exaggerate to a ridiculous extent the possibilities of Ottoman reformation. They were asking from the Turk the impossible.

Nicholas I and Napoleon III. The Contention Over the "Holy Places"

Under these circumstances events drifted somewhat quietly until 1852. By that time two things had taken place. The reforms undertaken by Reschid Pasha and other enlightened Turks had just produced effect enough to permit expectations that the Sultan's Empire would probably last longer than had been confidently predicted—and therefore that Nicholas's hope for an excuse for a great Russian intervention must be postponed. Secondly, in France there had climbed to power the supreme adventurer who rejoiced in the imperial title of Napoleon III, and who (despite his pacific professions) needed a brilliantly victorious war to catch the French imagination and confirm him in that Seat of the Mighty so evilly won for him by the *coup d'état* (1851).

Nicholas I was frankly hostile to Napoleon III. He regarded him as a mere interloper among the fraternity of monarchs, and detested his perpetual jargon concerning "plebiscites." He gave him official recognition very grudgingly and then he angered the new French ruler by merely addressing him as "good friend" instead of by the conventional term "dear brother." The "good friend" was bitterly

[3] As early as 1792 the younger Pitt laid down in a parliamentary speech that "the true doctrine of the Balance of Power required that the Russian Empire should not, if possible, be allowed to increase, nor that of Turkey to diminish." Fox, however, declared that the overthrow of Turkey would be a boon to the world.

resentful. Both Russia and France were therefore in a distinct mood for a quarrel, but Nicholas fatuously drove ahead, confident that whatever happened he could count on the neutrality of England, and that Napoleon would not risk a great war unaided. In this Nicholas deceived himself (as other monarchs have been deceived) by the vehement professions of love of "peace" in many supposedly influential British quarters and by the belief that the then British ministry was of extreme pacifist tendencies.

Between France and Russia it was easy to blow the small sparks into flame. Since 1850 there had been dangerous friction between Latin ecclesiastics (under French protection) and Greek ecclesiastics (under Russian protection) as to their respective rights to control the "Holy Places" in and around Jerusalem. To which faction should belong "the keys to the north and south gates of the great church at Bethlehem" or of "the grotto of the Holy Manger"? Could the sacred buildings be shared by two quarreling, uncharitable sets of monks, priests, and pilgrims? Could the Latins be asked "to celebrate mass at the 'Church of the Virgin' upon a schismatic [Greek] slab of marble, and before a crucifix which had its feet separated"? French and Russian diplomats raked up all the old firmans, concessions and treaties (often very contradictory) upon these questions granted by the Porte since 1535. The unhappy Islamites may well have been perplexed and scandalized at a contest which, as a British diplomat wrote, "made the tomb of Christ a quarrel among Christians." At last, late in 1852, the Porte very reluctantly rendered a decision substantially favoring the French. Great was now the blow to Russian prestige throughout the Levant, and great became the need that by some sudden stroke Nicholas should restore it.

Mentschikoff at Constantinople. Nicholas I and "the Very Sick Man" (1853 A. D.)

The Czar therefore sent his Prince Mentschikoff to Constantinople as his extraordinary ambassador, to demand a complete settlement of all the standing issues between the Porte and Russia. Mentschikoff was a tactless, arrogant man, who tried to intimidate the Ottomans by his brutal demands. After some preliminary backing and filling, in which the Russian was completely out-maneuvered

by the very astute British ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,[4] who acted as prime counselor to the Turks. Mentschikoff now came forward with his real demand that the Sultan grant the Czar a treaty guaranteeing to the Orthodox clergy and Church in the Ottoman Empire "all their ancient privileges and all the advantages accorded to other Christian bodies." In effect hereafter any "Greek" bishop with the slightest grievance could then appeal to Russia, and Russia would have an official right to interfere in the internal affairs of Turkey. This meant practically putting the whole Empire of the Sultans under a Russian protectorate.

Stiffened by British encouragement the Turks gave Mentschikoff a formal refusal (May, 1853) and in high dudgeon he quitted Constantinople. Nicholas had now been flouted before the entire world. He still imagined that he had merely to deal with Turkey and possibly with France. Austria he considered friendly.[5] He believed he could reach an understanding with England. Already he had told Seymour, the British ambassador to St. Petersburg: *"We have on our hands a sick man*—a very sick man. It will be, I tell you, frankly, a great misfortune, if one of these days he should slip away from us, especially before all necessary arrangements had been made." Then he talked very directly about possible divisions of the Ottoman Empire. Egypt and Crete could go to Britain. He did not intend to annex Constantinople himself but might occupy it "temporarily," etc. He evidently counted France as negligible, provided he could arrange with England, and, as stated, he was foolishly misled by the pacifist utterances of sundry British statesmen. The effect of his interview with Seymour was, however, calamitous. As the latter cogently reported to London, "A sovran who insists [on such things] must have settled in his own mind that the hour, if not of the dissolution [of Turkey], but at all events *for* its dissolution, must be at hand."

[4] Lord Stratford de Redcliffe was British Ambassador to the Porte from 1841 through the Crimean War, as well as rendering diplomatic service earlier in the Near East. A man of extraordinary parts, he exercised an influence far in excess of that of the average ambassador even of a very great power. The Turks had implicit trust in him. He was known as the "Great Elchi" (the "Great Ambassador"). He was a constant foe of Russia. Stratford strove earnestly to make genuine the Ottoman attempts to reform, but presently gave up in despair: "There is no such thing as system in Turkey," he wrote. "Every man, according to his means and opportunities, gets what he can, commands when he dares, and submits when he must."

[5] In 1848-1849 his armies had been of the greatest value to the Hapsburgs in crushing their Hungarian rebels. He vainly counted on the gratitude of the Vienna government for a very essential service.

British Sentiment Forces the Crimean War (1853 A. D.)

Russia and France were now in a position where neither could give way without a ruinous loss of prestige for their respective rulers. Had there been a genuine desire for peace matters still could have been easily compounded. They could also have been settled, despite bellicose intentions, had the British been able to put aside their intense distrust of Nicholas, to recognize the moral impossibility of bolstering up by a permanent policy a régime like the Ottoman, and to mobilize the conscience and intelligence of the world for liquidating an Empire that long since had wearied God by its crimes. But the British public was in a peculiar state of mind. "In 1853 nearly forty years of peace had passed over the heads of the British people, and a generation had grown up which knew the horrors of war from books alone." There was then a great amount of "fighting blood" in the British Isles entirely willing for an outlet: there was intense detestation of the brutal autocrat in St. Petersburg: and there was corresponding fear for the safety of the road to India. A powerful and none too creditable propaganda in England minimized the iniquities of Ottoman rule and grossly exaggerated the possibilities of Ottoman regeneration. Under those circumstances Britain, France and Russia all three stumbled along into *a thoroughly avoidable war.*

Long years have elapsed since the Crimean War was the "Great War" occupying men's minds. Truth to tell, as armed conflicts go, it was not very significant and had only one important military episode. It was waged in a quarter of the world where, thanks to Russian difficulties of transport by land and Franco-British difficulties by sea, only relatively small armies could be used. Nicholas I had driven ahead expecting only to fight Turkey, underestimating once more the qualities of the Turks for *defensive* warfare, and exaggerating in like measure the capacities of his own armies.[6] To his amazement and humiliation he found that he had to fight both England and France, with Austria positively unfriendly.

The main phases of this inglorious Crimean War were these:

[6] The *offensive* qualities of Russian armies have been overestimated from the first attacks of the Pagan Rus on Constantinople (see p. 53) to the ill-starred drive of the Bolshevist forces on Warsaw in 1920.

First Stages of the War. Repulse of the Russian Attack (1853-1854 A. D.)

I. In July, 1853, without actually declaring war, the Czar sent his troops into the Roumanian principalities, to hold them as "security" for the "restoration" of his rights. A British fleet thereupon sailed to Constantinople. The Russian answer came when the Czar's Black Sea fleet attacked and destroyed a large part of the Turkish navy off the port of Sinope. This forcing of the issue, while there was still a chance for negotiations, threw the British public into a fit of rage. The pacifistic Aberdeen ministry was constrained to join with France and to notify Nicholas that henceforth every Russian ship on the Black Sea would be "requested, and if necessary constrained, to return to Sebastopol: and in March, 1854, both England and France declared war upon the Czar.

II. The Russian forces easily occupied Moldavia and Wallachia. When it came, however, to crossing the Danube, the Turks made an unexpectedly obstinate resistance. Not until early in 1854 were the Czarist generals able to attack the great river fortress of Silistria, and even then they could not complete the investment, because French and British troops were already reaching Varna on the Black Sea and giving the Ottomans substantial aid. Then of a sudden Nicholas discovered that Austria was about to join the Allies against him, and throw 50,000 men into Wallachia. With Austria hostile on his flank a Russian advance over the Balkans became madness. The Czarists hastily retired, and by August 2, 1854, the last of them crossed the Pruth. Nicholas had thus failed in a most humiliating fashion, though hardly fighting an important battle. An army of the "ungrateful Hapsburgs" immediately occupied the Roumanian Principalities pending an international conference and a formal treaty.

III. "The primary object of the war had thus been easily obtained. But Britain and France were by no means content with a triumph that left untouched the vast resources of an enemy who was certain to employ them at the next opportunity." Napoleon III needed to report to the French nation a few genuine "victories." British fighting blood was roused, and the British nation would probably have been really disappointed if peace had been made thus tamely. As for Nicholas, he was cut to the quick by Austria's

action, but drew back on the defensive, refused accommodation and declared he would "wait the progress of events." An offensive war with Russia was really difficult for the Allies. A British fleet had accomplished little in the Baltic. It seemed folly to plan an extensive invasion of Russia. The war, if it continued, seemed therefore to become one "between an elephant and a whale."

Siege of Sebastopol (1854-1855 A. D.)

IV. Public opinion and cabinet exigency in both France and Britain now demanded that Russia should be attacked, and the Allied governments selected the Crimean peninsula with the naval fortress of Sebastopol as the Achilles' heel of the Czar. St. Arnaud, the French, and Lord Raglan, the British, commanders of the Allied forces in the West were therefore instructed somewhat casually to "concert measures for the siege of Sebastopol." There were many delays in preparing the expedition, which was attempted without any real understanding of all that was likely to be involved. Even before they quitted their base at Varna, cholera had decimated the Allied armies. The Russians on their part had not expected an attack in the Crimea, and had stationed there only some 50,000 men. They were therefore unable to prevent the Allies from forcing a landing near Sebastopol on September 14, 1854, when 21,000 English, 30,000 French and 6000 Turks got ashore at the small port of Eupatoria, with about 250 cannon of various calibers.

V. Had the Allies without hesitation struck vigorously at Sebastopol, they could probably have seized the city; but the Russians made the most of delays, bad generalship, and the absence of a united command among their enemies. The Czar's general, Mentschikoff, did his best with inferior numbers in a series of delaying battles which the Allies won, indeed, thanks to the admirable fighting quality of the French and British soldiery, but which rendered their advance slow and painful. The battle of the Alma at length enabled them to press close to Sebastopol, but it was now too late to grasp the prize. The Russians had sunk their fleet to blockade the harbor, and 3000 cannon taken from the ships enabled the skillful engineer Totleben to enring the city with batteries nigh impregnable. It proved also impossible to blockade the place completely. Russian reënforcements were thrown into Sebastopol and vicious attacks were made upon the Allied positions and communications. Long departed

now are the days when the English-speaking world was thrilled by the "Charge of the Light Brigade" at the almost Homeric battle of Balaklava, followed by the even more desperate battle of Inkerman. These struggles finally settled that Mentschikoff could not raise the investment,[7] and both sides settled down to a long struggle of endurance.

VI. In the siege which followed the Franco-British army suffered cruelly from a northern winter spent in battle positions—an ordeal made doubly severe by the unpardonable failure to provide proper clothing, housing and sanitary equipment. A storm in November wrecked thirty vessels laden with camp necessities. The British army was rendered nigh helpless by cold and disease. The French, a little more resourceful and fortunate, endured the ordeal slightly better. But although Nicholas I had boasted that "Generals January and February" were his best allies, even they could not make his tenacious foes lift the siege. In March, 1855, he died a chagrined and defeated man.

The Franco-British at last received large reënforcements. The Russians nevertheless flung back one desperate assault after another, and defied an "infernal bombardment," when in a single day 800 cannon fired the then unprecedented number of 70,000 projectiles into the fortress. But the end really came on September 8, when, although the British failed in their courageous attacks on the "Grand Redan," the French stormed and held the even more important earthwork of the "Malakoff." That night the Russians evacuated the city. The last day of fighting had cost the Allies 10,000 and the Russians 13,000 men.

Treaty of Paris (1856 A. D.). Temporary Repulse of Russia

VII. After the fall of Sebastopol it was impossible for the war to continue. There was no other point where the Allies could attack Russia, but in Sebastopol they now actually held an essential piece of Muscovite soil. A few successes by his generals over the Turks in Armenia salved the pride of the new Czar Alexander II, who understood well the absolute need of making peace lest his own top-heavy empire be ruined. The Russians had found it almost impossible to supply their armies in the Crimea, and "the desert tracks of

[7] Although American readers, relying on English narratives, have hardly realized it, apparently the major share of the fighting was done by the French. It was they who saved the English from being crushed by numbers in the decisive combat at Inkerman.

Southern Russia were marked at every step by the corpses of horses and men who had fallen on their way to Sebastopol." Napoleon III in turn had secured "glory" enough to serve his political purposes, and urged on his allies the need of moderation. The war was therefore wound up at the *Congress of Paris* (February 25 to March 30, 1856).[8]

VIII. Russia was in a humbled mood and had to pay the price of temporary defeat. In order to deprive her of control of the mouth of the Danube, she was forced to cede Bessarabia to Moldavia, she was forbidden to maintain warships or arsenals on the Black Sea,[9] and she had to give up any pretensions to an exclusive protectorate over the Christians in the Ottoman Empire. As for Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia, they were confirmed in their rights of self-government and placed under the protection of all the Great Powers. The latter, furthermore, in an exceedingly solemn fashion "guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire," and declared that "any future act which impairs the same will be considered a question of European interest," while the Sultan in gratitude to his protectors made an equally solemn promise of drastic internal reforms.

Thus Turkey was officially placed under the protection of "Europe." Russia had lost her chance to devour the estates of the Sick Man. Seen in retrospect, it is proper to say that while the policy of Nicholas I was blundering and brutal, if France and Britain had been willing honestly and fearlessly to have compounded with him, the Ottoman Empire might have been liquidated in the 1850's with relatively little bloodshed, without an inordinate increase of Russian power, and to the avoidance of an infinite amount of future calamity. As Sir Robert Morier declared bitterly in 1870, the Crimean War was "the only perfectly useless modern war that has been waged," while about 1890 Lord Salisbury made the equally eloquent confession, "*England put her money on the wrong horse.*"

The Ottoman thus was saved from Russia, but France and Britain could not save him from himself. The Sultan did indeed in 1856

[8] It seems needless to discuss here how Sardinia-Piedmont sent an army to the Crimea to assist the Allies, and consequently secured a seat at the Congress of Paris. Cavour had no direct quarrel with Russia, but his move was almost solely to affect the Italian situation and compel the Western diplomats to heed his representations.

[9] This limitation she repudiated in 1870 at the alleged instigation of Bismarck, who desired Russian countenance against France. Austria and Britain vainly fumed and protested. The British did not care to go to war on such a limited issue, but by this act they lost the only essential thing they had gained by the Crimean War.

publish a reform edict, the much lauded *"Hatti-Humayoun,"* confirming the good intentions announced in 1839 and asserting that henceforth Christians were to be on a legal equality with Moslems. They were now to be admitted to all ranks of the army and to every kind of civil office. They were no longer to pay the poll tax. They must be represented in the provincial councils, etc. It proved simply impossible to translate these "brave words" into action. The Christians usually hated military service under tyrannous Moslem officers. They preferred to pay the poll tax. The Moslems simply refused to obey Giaours if the latter were appointed officials, and would not treat them as equals in the courts. The old abuses nearly all continued and the "reforms" existed only on paper.

In 1861 Abdul-Mejid drank himself into the grave and was succeeded by his brother, Abdul-Aziz (1861-1876). Under that Sultan the Ottoman Empire drifted into new troubles from which even the ardent championship of Britain could not bring deliverance.[10]

[10] Abdul-Aziz personally had good intentions and a fairly amiable character. He actually made a visit of state to Western Europe, but "all he brought back was a confused recollection of broad streets and squares, and lofty houses decorated in his honor. He had seen little or nothing of European civilization save the brilliant pageants organized to captivate his imagination." [Davey.] His ideas of "reform" were largely confined to reorganizing his court and palaces on the basis of what he had seen at London and Paris. Presently he fell under the power of Mihri Hanum, a Circassian slave girl, "with blue eyes, fair hair, luscious lips and extreme grace." He could deny her nothing, and "in a single year she abstracted from the treasury no less than £1,000,000 to spend in jewels and costly toys, mostly purchased at the French shops in the Grand Rue, Pera." This was at a time when the army was unpaid and the provinces were being ravaged by famine. When the ministers spoke of economy and reported unwelcome truths, Abdul-Aziz drove them from his presence as "traitors" and "betrayers." So another fine set of reform proposals evaporated!

CHAPTER XXIX

THE NEW BALKAN NATIONS, 1830-1876

After 1830 the history of the Near East is no longer simply the history of the Ottoman Empire. Greece was an independent kingdom albeit a small and troubled one. In Serbia and in the Roumanian principalities the Sultan saw his powers of interference continuously waning. The Balkan peninsula was reverting to the status that existed prior to 1350—a group of contentious, overlapping nationalities, cursed with much poverty and a very imperfect civilization. It is very hard to make the history of these revived or new nationalities appear significant unless ample details, permitting the personal touch, are admissible. Their bare annals may, however, be stated somewhat as follows:

The Roumanian Principalities Prior to 1830 A. D.

I. The Roumanian principalities were now actually more in the power of Russia than of the Porte. Prior to the Treaty of Adrianople (see p. 298) the Roumanian people, although exempt from the more obvious forms of Turkish oppression, had endured a miserable existence. Their "hospodars" had been Phanariot Greeks who bought their appointment from the Sultan and who knew that their terms of office would be very short. Invested, however, with practically despotic powers while they *did* govern, they exploited the Roumanians after the manner of Verres and his fellow pro-prætors of the decadent Roman Republic. Between 1716 and 1821 there were 37 of these hospodars in Wallachia, and 33 in Moldavia (the smaller and poorer principality). After wars between Russia and Turkey became frequent, the standard proceeding of the Muscovites was immediately to invade "the Principalities" as the normal opening of the campaign. There they would remain, subsisting by ruinous requisitions upon the helpless Roumanians, until peace was signed.

The country was almost purely agricultural, with vast estates of the boyars, who usually lived at the capitals of Bucharest or Jassy,

and let their overseers exploit the doltish unkempt peasants. The latter owned little or no land and paid an outrageous rental for their farms either in produce or in personal labor. The villages of low huts were so mean and obscure that travelers passing through the country often imagined wide tracts to be without houses. "In the hovels there were neither dishes, furniture nor provisions. The Wallachian carried his knife, his pipe and tobacco on his person, leaving nothing in his house." At the two capitals, however, there was already a gaudy, pretentious life with a great imitation of Paris customs and clothes, and with much bad French chattered by the nobility. Bucharest in fact seemed "an oasis of French civilization set in Slavic or Oriental waste."

The Struggle for Roumanian National Union (1834-1862 A. D.)

The Russians only evacuated the Principalities in 1834 after setting up hospodars who were largely of their own choosing, but these were at least Roumanians. The age of Phanariot short-term despots was over. The most important man in the entire region really appeared to be the Russian consul general at Bucharest.

During the next two decades there were few important events. But the boyar classes were rich and progressive enough to send many of their sons to Western universities, particularly in France. The Roumanians thus became aware of their "Latin" heritage, and many of their younger leaders were surcharged with French ideals. When the abortive revolutions of 1848 swept over Europe the Principalities were not exempt from its influence. The Moldavian hospodar, indeed, promptly flung the agitators for a liberal constitution into jail, but his Wallachian colleague was forced by a popular uprising to sign a constitution, then fled in dismay into Transylvania. Russia and Turkey for once united, however, in the congenial task of suppressing liberalism and restoring in Wallachia the autocratic "Organic Law" proclaimed in 1834. Then followed the Crimean War with first Russian then Austrian troops occupying the country. The war, fortunately, terminated with a practical abolution of the Czarist protectorate. Part of Bessarabia was given back to Moldavia, and the Principalities were put under the "collective guarantee" of the Powers. The Porte, for its part, lost all

right to interfere in the internal government of the country, provided it received a moderate tribute.

By this time there had awakened a keen Roumanian national consciousness, at least among the upper classes. It was steadfastly urged that the division into two weak principalities was purely artificial, and served no honest end. The Ottoman and Austrian interests, both anxious to maintain a weak Roumania, to be sure, opposed this propaganda, but the unionists at length obtained the backing of the most powerful man then in Europe—Napoleon III. Thanks to French pressure the Turkish suzerain was presently compelled to agree to an arrangement by which the two principalities retained their own hospodars and representative assemblies, but enjoyed a "joint commission for common affairs" and a single high court of justice (1858).

From this arrangement it was only a step for the two assemblies to elect in 1859, the same individual as hospodar over both—the Moldavian boyar, Couza: as "Alexander I, Prince of Roumania." "The Roumanian nation is founded," Couza declared in a stately proclamation, and the two separate governments were promptly merged. The Sultan, Russia and Austria, each for his own reasons frowned, but dared not intervene actively lest they upset the whole situation in the Near East. In 1862 they grudgingly recognized Couza as prince of the united nation. So after centuries of oblivion the bearers of the old Latin tradition planted beyond the Danube by Trajan, lifted their heads as members of a recognized civilized state. A significant future was waiting them.

Fall of Couza. Prince Charles I of Roumania

Couza, however, did not have a long or happy reign. He was an efficient despot who accomplished much to improve the economic conditions of the country, and above all he put through drastic measures breaking up the great estates and assigning the land to the peasant tenantry. All this inevitably rendered Couza detested by the boyars, and the manner in which he defied the national assembly, ruled without a regular budget, appointed ministers by personal whim, and had himself declared "hereditary prince," gave plenty of handles against him. In 1866, therefore, a sudden conspiracy forced him to abdicate and to quit the country.

The Roumanians now realized they could never unite behind a

native sovran. They accordingly invited to the throne Charles of Hohenzollern, a Prussian prince who, however, was a cousin of Napoleon III. Austria was bitterly opposed to seeing a Hohenzollern reigning at the mouth of the Danube, but Bismarck, then rising in power, encouraged the young man to proceed, "if only for the sake of a piquant adventure." The Prince slipped down the Danube in a steamer disguised as a second-class passenger, and entered his new dominions almost by stealth. Austria was very angry at his proceedings, but she was about to be involved in her disastrous war with Prussia, and the battle of Sadowa gave her other things to think of. "Charles I," the "King Carol" of later decades, proved himself a clear-headed and moderate ruler. The constitution of Roumania was amended in a wisely liberal spirit; and the government became genuinely "responsible," with a ministry that was dependent not on the monarch but on the legislature. Roumania therefore endured unwonted quiet and a steady rise in public intelligence and prosperity, until the events of 1875-1878 again brought in Russian armies and new complications.

Autonomous Serbia (1830-1875)

II. The story of Serbia between 1830 and 1875 is less important. The new principality was much smaller and much poorer than the Roumanian lands. From 1818 to 1830 the Turks still had considerable garrisons in the country, and Milosh, the newly elevated "Prince of the Serbians of the Pashalik of Belgrade," carefully remained neutral, first during Greek uprising (with which the Serbians naturally sympathized), and then during the greater war between Russia and Turkey. The Sultan rewarded him for this good behavior by making him hereditary prince and by withdrawing most of the Turkish garrisons save that in Belgrade. But Milosh at length outlived his welcome among his own people. He played the absolute despot, according to common report, seizing whatever property he wished and paying when it pleased him, and when in 1837 the pressure of the Powers forced on him a "Senate" and a kind of an organic law, he presently abdicated rather than try to rule as a constitutional monarch (1839).

The little principality now became the scene of a series of dynastic revolutions disastrous to its tranquillity. The descendants of old Kara-George, the earlier hero of the War for Independence, came

on the scene. In 1842 Alexander "Kara-Georgevich" was proclaimed prince. He reigned until 1857, though often complained of by his subjects as being too subservient to the Turks and too friendly with the Austrians and the Catholics. In 1858 he was deposed by the usual type of a popular uprising, and the "Skupshtina" (national assembly) actually called back Milosh. "The latter was now 79 years old, but was still irascible and tumultuous, and matters were drifting towards another upheaval when the aged prince fortunately died to make room for a man of greater moderation."

Michael Obrenovich, son of the late ruler, was by far the best prince possessed by his afflicted little country at least in modern times (1860-1868). He had traveled in the West, and had an intelligent vision of lifting his nation to a decent level of civilization. Very early in his reign friction arose over the presence of 4000 Turkish regulars still in garrison at Belgrade. The presence of these uncongenial Moslems had caused constant bickering. In June, 1862, there was brawling between various low-class Serbs and sundry Turks of the garrison. Shots were fired and lives lost, but the foreign consuls believed they had quieted the situation, when suddenly without warning the Turkish fortress guns opened fire on the town and for five hours bombarded the helpless city. This produced instant protests from the Western diplomats and representations at Constantinople. The Sultan wisely consented to withdraw most of his garrisons from Serbia, and in 1867 Michael secured the departure of the last of them. Serbia was now practically as independent as Roumania.

The prince thus seemed a great success as a diplomat. He did much also as civil administrator. The beginnings were made at organizing an efficient army to replace a very crude type of militia. But the very moderation and success of Michael raised up for him plenty of enemies, who only understood the very crude "Balkan" methods for expressing political dissent. He had also angered many ardent Serbs by refusing to embark on grandiose schemes for attacking the Ottomans, and the exiled Kara-Georgevitch dynasty never ceased to plot against him. In June, 1868, the prince was walking in the park of Toptchider at Belgrade with a lady to whom he was betrothed and her mother. Three men sprang from the shrubbery and fired. Michael and the elder woman fell dead. So perished "the best ruler that modern Serbia has yet had."

The assassins were soon caught. They were common criminals, the tools obviously of greater men whose identity was never clearly discovered, but public opinion accused the Kara-Georgeviches and their entire family was forbidden to enter Serbian soil. Michael's kinsman, Milan, was thereupon duly proclaimed "Prince": he was then only fourteen, at school, it so chanced, in Paris, and his grievous defects of character were not known. His regents in 1869 wisely put through a Constitution creating a "Skupshtina" with one member for every 10,000 inhabitants, and chosen on a fairly liberal franchise, although one fourth of the Parliament could be appointed by the ruler.

Serbia thus became organized along conventional lines as a parliamentary country. But no fiat of a legislature could efface the traces of four centuries of grinding Ottoman oppression, or make the nation seem other than a rather pathetic little country wedged in between imposing Austria and Turkey, with mighty Russia overshadowing from the distance. Furthermore, very much of the old Serbian land was still under the Ottoman yoke, when the map of the Balkans was to be drawn afresh in 1878.

Greece After the War for Independence. King Otho (1833-1862 A. D.)

III. Greece was fortunate above her contemporaries to the North in that her independence from 1830 onward was absolute, without vassalage or tribute to the Porte, and that the two most liberal powers in Europe, England and France, took a direct and fairly effective interest in her welfare.

It would perhaps have been better for Greece if her national traditions had been less magnificent. Appeals to the memories of Pericles and Demosthenes were poor substitutes for law, order, efficient administration, and that slow, lusterless work needful to make a small backward nation into one which is self-respecting and prosperous if not vast and powerful. The country had been nigh ruined by ten years of desolating war. There was already a heavy public debt. "The Greek nation has spent all the rest of the nineteenth century in renewing its population, restoring its land to cultivation, ridding itself of brigands, and trying to increase its territory and improve its financial condition."

In 1832 the protecting powers (Russia, France, and Britain)

offered the crown of Greece to Prince Otho, the second son of the phil-Hellene King of Bavaria, then only seventeen years of age. To give their protégé a fair start he was promised a loan of about $12,000,000, a small force of Bavarian soldiers, and the services of various German experts supposedly able to help him to set up a competent government. The democratic spirit of the Greeks were conciliated by allowing a National Assembly to convene to ratify this choice and such a gathering of 224 deputies met at the town of Pronoia, "in a wooden shanty, through the interstices of which the free and easy representatives were wont to inhale the tobacco from their protruding pipes." So finally was constituted the free nation that was supposed to take up that glorious history which had lapsed when Philip of Macedon triumphed at Chæroneia!

Otho landed at Nauplia in 1833. He proved (as he grew older) a well-intentioned but heavy, unimaginative ruler, without a spark of true liberalism and in general of the pedantic Teutonic cast of mind. With him were German noblemen and professors of jurisprudence who were jealous of their own prerogatives, treated Greek problems academically and withal quarreled bitterly among themselves. They were sent to govern men who had been made almost into brigands by centuries of Turkish oppression followed by a desolating war. The Greeks as a nation were intensely democratic, and did not take kindly either to royal etiquette or Bavarian dictation. The King's German ministers did a creditable piece of work in organizing the country with considerable thoroughness, and setting up a fairly efficient system of public justice and administration. They had to wrestle, however, with one petty revolt after another, which were put down often by foreign bayonets, and thereby to the great wounding of Greek pride. As Otho grew older, he learned, it is true, to lean less on German advisers, but he could not endear himself to his subjects. Finally, in 1843 a band of conspirators in the newly organized native army seized Athens, and made the streets of the new and very crude capital ring with the shouts, "Long live the Constitution!" The King was overpowered. The British minister gave countenance to the demand of the insurgents, and Otho signed a decree ordering a National Assembly to be convened, which body gave Greece a constitution with an elective Chamber (*Boulē*) but with a Senate (*Gerousia*) in the choice whereof the crown possessed a very large share.

Overthrow of Otho (1826 A. D.). George of Denmark Elected King

Otho now reigned for some years as a constitutional king, and regained something of his popularity. Ministries came and went. Modern Greek politics soon showed themselves to be as sharp, personal and factious as those of the Hellas of old. Extreme interest was taken in parliamentary debates and Athens (considering the size of the city) soon boasted an extraordinary number of newspapers, famous for their long editorials and partisan venom. The real question for the Greeks, however, was that of the enlargement of their boundaries. Excluding the great Greek populations in Constantinople, Smyrna, and many other points in the Levant, the treaty of 1830 had left Thessaly, Southern Epirus and most of the Ægean Isles under the Turkish yoke, although the Moslems were a very small fraction of the population.[1] In Crete especially the Christian majority clamored for annexation to Greece, although stoutly resisted by the considerable Moslem minority and of course by the Turkish government. The Crimean War seemed to present the opportunity to win for the little kingdom this "unredeemed Hellas." But France and Britain sternly repressed any attempt to tear land from their Ottoman Ally. From 1854 to 1857 French troops actually occupied the Peiræus, the harbor town of Athens. Otho was not to blame for this attitude by the powers, but Greek opinion made him the scapegoat. In 1862 another military uprising drove him from the throne, and he died in exile.

The change was for the better. Largely at the instigation of Mr. Gladstone (who was convinced that the islands were of little value to Britain) the British government now allowed the Ionian Isles to annex themselves to Greece, which they at once did to the great delight of both the islanders and original Hellenes. The Greeks themselves were extraordinarily anxious to please Britain and to prevent any hitch in the final transfer. They elected as King Prince Alfred, son of Queen Victoria. When he declined this "seat perilous," there was an awkward three months while the crown of Greece was hawked about among the minor princes of Europe. At

[1] Samos, after 1832, had autonomy under a Christian prince. The island since then had a rather checkered and turbulent history, more, however, because of squabbles between the princes (named by the Porte) and the inhabitants than because of direct Turkish interference. In 1912, apparently to the great satisfaction of the Samians, they were merged with Greece.

last the Powers and the Greeks themselves united upon Prince George, the second son of the heir of the Danish throne, and that personage consented to make the venture. Fate ordained that "George I, King of the Hellenes," should reign until 1913, and then die after witnessing his people victors in a war which brought to them nearly all of the territory they had coveted so ardently.

A new Constitution was adopted for Greece in 1864. It was much more democratic than the system of 1843. The Senate was abolished. Hereafter ministries rose and sank in rapid succession dependent upon the passing pleasure of the majority of the Boulē alone. The result was that much of the political history of Modern Greece seemed to be a record of change without progress. Nevertheless the natural abilities of the Greek people, freed now from the alien yoke, at last began to assert themselves. Little by little brigandage was abolished. Population and wealth increased. The University of Athens became a true center for liberal modern learning. An efficient school system was founded. The rich Greek merchants in foreign cities assisted the growth of their mother country with noble legacies and benefactions. So Greece, not indeed the land of Themistocles and Aristeides, but a much afflicted, backward country, struggled slowly upward until the great reorganization of the Balkans in the 1870's.

CHAPTER XXX

THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR (1877). THE CONGRESS AND TREATY OF BERLIN (1878)

The Ottoman Empire After the Crimean War Period

During the 1860's there was relative calm in the Levant. Western Europe was very much preoccupied with the tremendous events which centered around the making of United Italy, the humiliation of Austria, and the reorganization of Germany under the Hegemony of Prussia, and finally with the defeat of France and the overthrow of Napoleon III. During these years European statesmen were glad to ignore the woes of the Ottoman Empire just as much as possible, although the Turks later charged that Russian agents systematically intrigued, especially in Bosnia and Bulgaria, to stir up the natives to resist their Moslem masters.[1]

From time to time the Powers indeed protested (justly enough) that the fine promises made by the Porte after the Crimean War were not being carried into effect. The oft praised *Hatti-Humayoun* (see p. 320) was practically a dead letter. Christians were still excluded from office and from military service under endurable conditions, and were denied equal justice with Moslems in the courts. The Turkish police were still recruited from the criminal classes. Tax-farming (the worst of many financial abuses) had been restored, etc. It was well asserted by Russian critics of the whole impossible situation: *"Equality before the law will never be realized in Turkey so long as Turks are Turks;* that is, until they foreswear the Koran, which traces an ineffaceable line between them and the Christians."

Probably there was no need for Muscovite agents to remind the

[1] In 1863 occurred an event of greater import for the Near East than many matters which concerned the diplomats. A farsighted American philanthropist, Charles Robert, founded *"Robert College,"* located upon a magnificent and strategic site on the European side of the Bosphorus. The importance of this institution, with a faculty largely of Americans, and providing a distinctively American education to the youth of the Levant, has been incalculable. Many members of its faculty have had a distinguished part in the reorganization of the Near East. Very many students have been Bulgarians. A British author wrote in 1907: "To Robert College, Bulgaria certainly owes the remarkable strides that country has made in European civilization and liberal ideas." [R. Davies.]

peoples in many of the Balkan lands that they had grievances. Bosnia and Herzegovina (being so close to autonomous Serbia and being inhabited by the selfsame South Slavs) were particularly conscious of their troubles. British statesmen having saved the Turks in the 1850's, now experienced a good many qualms of conscience about the situation for which they were somewhat responsible. In 1871 the British consul in Bosnia wrote home complaining of "the open bribery and corruption, the invariable and unjust favor shown to Mussulmans in all cases between Turks and Christians," which was characteristic of "what is called justice" throughout the Ottoman Empire: and that "of all cases of 'justice,' whether between Mussulmans alone, or between Turks and Christians, ninety out of a hundred are settled by bribery alone." Vainly did the London government give good advice to its Ottoman clients. Thus as early as 1861 Lord Russell warned the Sultan that "the public opinion of Europe would not approve of a protection accorded in order to prevent the signal punishment of a government which allowed [numerous] atrocities to continue."

This and all subsequent admonition slid as water over a duck's back from the polite "effendis" who issued orders in the name of the Padishah.

Southern Bosnian Insurrection (1875 A. D.). The Andrassy Note (1876 A. D.)

At last came the beginning of the end. In 1875 a serious insurrection against the Sultan's government broke out in Herzegovina (southern Bosnia) and all the persuasions and promises of the foreign consuls could not induce the malcontent peasants to lay down their arms. Almost simultaneously the Porte was obliged to astonish and anger the financial world by refusing to pay all the interest on its swollen public debt. The enraged capitalists, French, German, British, and Hebraic, became suddenly willing to believe the very worst of the charges against the Ottoman. Humanitarianism and lucre thus joined in the demand that something should be done to end a very evil situation.

At this time the "Three Empires" (Germany, Russia, and Austria) were attempting under Bismarck's uncle-like guidance to act in a kind of informal alliance. Early in 1876 they presented to the Porte a demand for reform, known commonly as the "Andrassy

Note" from the name of the Austrian Chancellor, its reputed author. Britain gave the note its "general adhesion." The Sultan accepted most of the demands "with almost suspicious promptitude." The Ottoman viziers had long since learned the great distance between accepting an unpalatable reform "in principle," and putting such a principle into concrete action.

In the year of diplomatic maneuvers which followed the real decision for weal or woe rested in last analysis with England. France lay stricken after the disaster of 1870, and could then adventure nothing in the Levant. The new power of Germany seemed at this time mainly interested in keeping the general peace, and in retaining the friendship (if the thing could be) of *both* Russia and Austria. Czar Alexander II was no lover of wars, but he had to reckon with the very strong "Pan-Slavist" agitation in his country (a movement which blew hot every grievance of the South Slavs), and a not unworthy desire of the Russian people to rescue their fellow Christians from the Moslem, as well as with the inevitable tendency of all his officials to see in the new situation a chance to redeem the humiliations of the Crimean War and to resume the march toward Tsargrad. With Austria the Czar's ministers presently thought they could reach an understanding which would save them from many of the disasters of 1850's. Only England remained. But England was now under the premiership of Disræli, an astute Semite, whose antipathy and distrust for Russia amounted to a monomania, and who had an inveterate tendency to ignore or apologize for all the shortcomings of Britain's "High Ally," the Porte. In all the moves which followed, the Turks acted under the misapprehension that whatever their crimes England would stand by them. They therefore committed new crimes and England did not stand by them.

The "Andrassy Note" producing no significant results, and the blaze in Bosnia threatening to spread wider, the "Three Empires" followed up their expostulations with the "Berlin Memorandum," more specific in its demands and threats. France and Italy gave in their adhesion to the document, but Britain now ostentatiously declined. A British fleet even rode off the Dardanelles as if to give support to the Porte against Russia. The result was that nothing was done to cure a situation becoming increasingly intolerable.

Serbian War with Turkey. The Bulgarian Massacres (1876 A. D.)

On June 30, 1876, Serbia declared war on the Porte in order to bring succor to her oppressed brethren in Bosnia. The next day tiny Montenegro did likewise. It was known that the disaffection against Ottoman rule was spreading into Bulgaria. Here there had been already certain signs of an enkindling sense of nationality. The Bulgarian people had been "politically conquered and absorbed by the Turks; socially and ecclesiastically by the Phanariot Greeks." For generations travelers passing through Bulgaria spoke of the Christian peasantry as "Greeks," but as early as 1856 the Porte had been obliged to permit the Bulgars to use their native tongue in schools and churches. In 1870 this nationalist revival at length induced the Turkish government to allow the setting up of a Bulgarian "Exarchate"—giving the Bulgars their own church and ecclesiastical head despite the vehement protests of the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople. Now at last when Serbia and Montenegro took up arms to assist the Bosniaks there was a stir in many of the Bulgarian villages. The once servile Rayahs defied the Turkish officials and slew about 100 of them.

The Ottomans, however, were able to defeat the ill-organized and ill-led Serbian forces without difficulty. By August Prince Milan was obliged to ask the mediation of the Powers to save his weak principality from general invasion. But the Porte made excessive demands and refused to listen to English expostulations. The Serbs though defeated were not cowed. They were confident of Russian help, and did not hope in vain. The Turkish advance was finally stayed by a Russian ultimatum—an armistice within forty-eight hours or war with the Czar. So the situation stood in November, 1876.

But meantime a hideous deed had cut the ground from under the friends of Turkey, who had been so active and potent in Disraeli's ministry. The resistance of the Bulgars had sent spasms of fear through every pasha's palace in Stamboul. If unchecked by a terrific example what nation of Rayahs might not revolt next? To stamp out insurgency large forces of *Bashi-Bazouks,* Moslem irregulars of the most irregular type, were turned loose in the unhappy Bulgarian villages apparently with orders to seek what they

might devour. What followed seems a massacre on a small scale compared with the slaughter of the Armenians in 1915-1916, but it was enough to paralyze the power of Disraeli to protect the Turks. In all about 12000 Christians seem to have been massacred. At the thriving town of Batak 5000 out of 7000 inhabitants probably perished. Of course neither age nor sex were spared, and lust and perfidy were added to the other acts of devilishness.

It was a pitiful commentary upon a phase of British politics that Disraeli and his fellow Tories tried their best to minimize the reports of these atrocities. They were not given to the world by the official consular reports, but by private English journalists. The prime-minister at first laughed at the stories of horror as "coffee-house babble." Sir Henry Elliot, his ambassador at Constantinople, telegraphed brutally "British interests are not concerned in the question whether ten or twenty thousand perished in the insurrection." But the horrid facts could not be cried down. Gladstone, Disraeli's inveterate opponent, emerged from his retirement to denounce this acquiescence in iniquity, and to picture the massacres in terms which stirred the conscience of England. "Let the Turks," he declared in a famous pamphlet, "now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely, by carrying off themselves. . . . One and all, *bag and baggage,* they shall, I hope clear out from that province they have desolated and profaned." In short the uproar in Britain was such that the Tory foreign secretary had to telegraph to Constantinople that "any sympathy previously felt . . . had been completely destroyed by the lamentable occurrences in Bulgaria." In dismay at last, some of the more intelligent Turkish officials demanded of the leaders of the massacres "how much had Russia paid them" for deeds that were obviously so much in her interest?

Palace Revolution at Constantinople. The "Turkish Constitution" (1876 A. D.). Last Attempts at Conciliation

Clearly it now behooved the Sultan to see the error of his ways, but the Sultan was no longer Abdul Aziz. At Constantinople very many elements were disgusted with the failure of that potentate either to defy the Gaiours or to conciliate them, and by his extravagance and subserviency to unworthy favorites. On May 29, 1876, a mutiny of high officers in the army secured his deposition. Four

days later Abdul-Aziz was dead, "by suicide" ran the official announcement.[2] In his stead reigned his nephew, Murad V, but three months later he was deposed in his turn ("for mental derangement") and Murad's brother, Abdul-Hamid II, "Abdul the Damned" of subsequent history, was set over the Faithful. This Sultan, later so astute and so powerful, was for the moment a puppet in the hands of a coterie of begs and pashas. He was hardly responsible for the calamities long postponed, but now inevitable, which now met his empire.

Later in 1876, as a last resort, a conference of the Powers was called at Constantinople to find *some* way in which the woes of the Balkan peninsula might be abated, yet nevertheless "the integrity of the Ottoman Empire" might be preserved. On December 23, the delegates were suddenly startled by the booming of cannon. A sleek and smiling Pasha announced that the new Padishah had, in his infinite benevolence, bestowed upon his people a most liberal constitution, a Senate named for life, a Chamber of Deputies chosen by all Ottoman subjects without respect to race or creed, freedom of meeting and of the press, a responsible ministry, an irremovable judiciary, etc. Turkey had thus to become a liberal, semi-democratic monarchy by one stroke of the pen! Having bestowed all these good things on his people the Sultan next calmly informed the Powers that they should stay their hands until his new Parliament could convene and enact specific laws for the healing of the subject nations. He, of course, as a strictly constitutional monarch, could do nothing personally, but expressed open surprise that the Powers did not recognize "the principles of equality and justice which the imperial government was seeking to introduce into its internal administration."

Their excellencies, the diplomats in council, refused to take this solemn farce very seriously. They formulated demands. The Porte specifically refused them. In the spring of 1877 they renewed the same in a last appeal known as the "London Protocol." The Turk rejected this also. Diplomacy was now exhausted. The Russians had behaved with great shrewdness and patience. The Turkish ministers had displayed again that though they "wore tight clothes and talked French" they had neither sincerity nor

[2] He is alleged to have cut his arteries with a pair of scissors given him for trimming his beard. Despite the fate that is normally awaiting fallen Oriental potentates, this story seems to have some probability.

intelligence under their red fezzes. When the question of Bulgaria had been raised they had pretended not to know which country was meant, then suddenly recollected it as a "geographical expression for some lands north of the Balkans." At last by a series of blunders truly masterly they had maneuvered themselves into a position where Britain could not reasonably ask Russia to refrain from war. Yet down to the end the Porte fatuously trusted to the Russophobe sentiments of Disraeli, and could not see how impossible it was for a British ministry to indulge in war in defiance of public opinion.

Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878 A. D.). Siege of Plevna

On April 24, 1877, Czar Alexander II, sure at length of the neutrality of Austria, declared war.[3] Roumania signed an agreement to let the Russians pass through her territories, and on June 22 a Russian army was across the Danube. The Russians were handicapped, however, by the fact that although since 1870 they had possessed the right to keep warships on the Black Sea, their fleet on those waters was still very inferior to the Turkish, which contained several formidable ironclads. Nevertheless by land the Russians seemed irresistible and at first their advance was very rapid. Abdul-Hamid's war ministers, however, had contrived to find money wherewith to equip their infantry with new breech-loaders superior to the Russian army rifles, and fortune sent to them *one* competent general worthy of the old Ottoman traditions of military efficiency.

By July, 1877, Russian troops were streaming over the Danube, Shipka Pass (one of the keys to the Balkans) was in their hands, and Constantinople trembled lest soon the Cossacks should devastate its suburbs. By a capital blunder, however, the invaders failed to seize Plevna in Bulgaria, a small town commanding the best roads for advance southward from the Danube. Into Plevna *Osman Pasha* threw himself with some 50,000 men. The first Russian attacks, made with inadequate forces, were beaten off, and Osman soon transformed the open town into a veritable intrenched camp. To advance southward leaving such a fortress in the rear was impossible. After vain assaults on their own part, the Russians were compelled to request aid from Prince Charles of Roumania. The Roumanians in

[3] Russia secured a promise of Austrian friendship by a series of secret negotiations which really give a key to much of the Balkan history of this epoch.

their turn assaulted the Turkish works most gallantly, but they could not take the key positions. There was nothing for it therefore but to hold up the whole Russian campaign until Osman could be beleaguered by 120,000 troops and gradually worn down and starved out. At last, after a vain sortie on December 10, he surrendered with 40,000 hungry men and the road to Constantinople could be resumed.

The siege of Plevna ought to have given the Porte a respite sufficient for making ample preparations for disputing further the Russian advance; but Osman was the Sultan's only general of tolerable ability. Two other Ottoman armies who tried to stop the Muscovites were routed. Serbia and Montenegro renewed their attacks on their old foes. On January 20, 1878, the Russians marched into Adrianople, while already the frightened ministers of Abdul-Hamid were clamorously invoking "the mediation of the Powers." On January 31, with his outposts almost at the environs of Constantinople, the Czar condescendingly granted an armistice to the successor of Solyman the Magnificent.

The Abortive Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878 A. D.). "Great" Bulgaria

The Russians understood well the advantages of confronting Europe with a *fait accompli.* With extreme haste they forced the terrified Turks to accede to a treaty which completely remade the map of the Balkan peninsula. March 3, 1878, witnessed the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano[4] between the Czarist and Ottoman peace delegates. This treaty would, if it had been allowed to stand, have restored the mediæval Bulgarian Empire of about 900 A. D. and while hopelessly dismembering Turkey would have put an end to Greek ambitions in Macedonia. Considerable additions were to be made to the territory of Serbia and of Montenegro, but the heart of the Treaty lay in the creation of a huge "vassal principality" of Bulgaria with a frontage upon the Ægean as well as upon the Euxine. To the Porte was to be left in Europe only three isolated fragments—Thrace, Salonica with its immediate hinterland, and Albania. Furthermore, in Armenia, where Russian armies had been advancing simultaneously with their comrades in the Balkans, Turkey ceded a consideration strip of territory. Bosnia was to be

[4] A small village near Constantinople.

put under a Christian governor general and be given autonomy. Finally the demoralized Sultan bound himself to pay an indemnity of 310,000,000 rubles (say $155,000,000).

"The Treaty of San Stefano was a wholly Slavonic settlement of a question which concerned other races as well." Instantly there arose protests, from Greece which saw herself hemmed in on the north by a new Christian state which would not crumble as assuredly must the Turks; from the Serbs, who beheld many fellow countrymen absorbed in the lands assigned the new Bulgaria; by Albanians who believed they would be certain of prompt spoliations, and by Roumanians who were furious at a clause inserted in the treaty making clear the Russian purpose to reannex Bessarabia. But of course the most effective protests came from Britain and Austria. It seemed as if the new Bulgaria was bound to be merely a new Russian province under a somewhat different name. It was not realized at the time that the Bulgars would prove anything but docile "little brothers" of their Czarist deliverers. "Liberated nations," cogently wrote Bismarck later, "are not grateful but exacting," and again as he pointed out "Even if the peace of San Stefano had been carried out intact [the expectation of permanent dependence of Bulgaria on Russia] would probably have proved false."

Austria had consented to the Russian attack, but she had never consented to consequences from a Russian victory which would absolutely ruin her hopes of that *Drang nach Osten* which might some day give to her Salonica if not Constantinople. As for Britain all the Cabinet's dislike of Russia was now at fever heat, and the nation on the whole was with the ministry. Lord Beaconsfield (Disraeli had just received the peerage under that title) rejoiced in a policy which headed straight towards war. The reserves were called out. An Indian contingent was ordered to Malta to display the solidarity of the British Empire. A special grant of £6,000,000 was asked from Parliament, and a British fleet rode in Besika Bay ready to steam to Constantinople if the Russians advanced nearer the city.[5]

[5] It was this crisis that enriched the English language with the word *"jingoism."* An unofficial poet laureate rejoiced the London music halls with the patriotic song:

"We don't want to fight;
But, *by jingo,* if we do,
We've got the men, we've got the ships,
And we've got the money, too!"

England and Austria Force a Revised Treaty. Congress of Berlin (June 13 to July 13, 1878 A. D.)

Beaconsfield was in truth in a strong and safe position. He knew that the war had been terribly costly to Russia and had strained the Czar's resources. He knew that Austria was practically as alarmed as was England and could attack the long Russian line of communications from Odessa to Adrianople. He had a just right to aver that any sweeping alterations in the map of the Balkans was an infraction of the Treaty of 1856 to which Britain was a party, and that in the changing of which she had an absolute right to be consulted. Under those circumstances Alexander II would hardly fight at least unless he could be sure of the neutrality of Austria. But only Germany could ensure that. The Czar believed he had rendered Bismarck great services in 1866 and especially in 1870 and now he expected substantial repayment, but the German Chancellor had already (for his own reasons) determined that if he could not have *both* Vienna and St. Petersburg for devoted friends, he must prefer to march with Vienna. He therefore seems to have left the Czar a good deal in the lurch, and put the enormous influence of victorious Germany not so much behind England (with whom, however, he desired to stand well) as behind the Balkan aspirations of Austria. Russia was angered and humiliated. Out of this pent-up wrath were presently to come vast consequences. But the immediate result was that Alexander II had to pocket his pride and consent to a Congress of the Powers. This pretentious gathering of high ministers opened at Berlin on June 13, 1878, and drew up a new treaty that was signed precisely one month later.

By the Treaty of Berlin the pact of San Stefano was plucked to pieces. Bismarck presided over and really dominated the Congress, but he professed that Germany had nothing to gain from any arrangements so long as Europe remained at peace, and Beaconsfield personally appeared the center of the conference. "The old Jew—*he's* the man!" is the way Bismarck shrewdly summed up the outward situation. The Russian high minister, Gortchakoff, of course fought for his master's interest and won on some minor items, but in the main the new treaty was very disappointing to Russia. The Turks, "the object of this surgical operation," had little direct influence, but of course they received back thankfully the sanjaks

which Allah and Beaconsfield restored to them. Roumania and Greece, countries whose futures were profoundly at stake, were only accorded a semi-tolerant hearing: and the discussions were conducted mostly by men who were woefully ignorant of the "vast and complicated regions" which they were apportioning and delimiting. Under such circumstances it is amazing that the results were not worse.

The Treaty of Berlin. "Small" Bulgaria Set Up (July 13, 1878)

The main decisions of the Congress of Berlin were these:

I. Some increase of territory was allowed to Serbia and Montenegro, but not so large as that granted by the earlier treaty, and not large enough to allow those South Slav countries to come together in contact. The "Sanjak of Novi-Bazar" still interposed its unfriendly bulk between them.

II. The Turks acknowledged Serbia and Roumania as independent nations (their rulers soon declared themselves to be "Kings") and also admitted officially the independence of Montenegro, a fact really of long standing.

III. Greece had made ample demands. She got for the moment nothing but promises, but the Porte was "invited to rectify" the Greek frontier. As a result, after much ill-feeling and quibbling Thessaly was ceded to Greece in 1881, although Crete, Epirus, and Macedonia still continued in Ottoman bondage.

IV. Roumania received extraordinarily shabby treatment. At the beginning of the war Russia had solemnly promised (if given passage across her) to "maintain and defend the actual integrity of Roumania." This pledge was now redeemed by deliberately detaching the Bessarabian lands lost by Russia in 1856, and putting them again under the Czar. As compensation Roumania was given the unhealthful and half-useless delta of the Danube, the Dobrudja which was now separated from the old Bulgarian territories—thus deliberately creating a standing issue between Roumania and the new Bulgarian state. Vainly the Roumanian envoys protested. The British privately condoled with them, but could not deny to the Czar all the fruits of Russian valor. As a Roumanian statesman bitterly but justly put it, "Not vanquished Turkey paid Russia her war costs, but Roumania."

V. Cyprus was put under the administration of Britain "to enable her to defend" the Asiatic possessions of the Sultan. Part of the Cyprian revenues were still to go to Turkey. In return the Sultan promised Britain by a special convention "to introduce necessary reforms" in the Asiatic provinces.[6]

VI. Kars, Batum and other points in Armenia were ceded by the Porte to Russia, and the Porte promised again "without delay to carry out ameliorations" in the condition of the Armenians still under its sway. This pledge was of course to be executed in the usual Ottoman manner (see p. 357).

VII. Bosnia and Herzegovina were handed over to be "occupied and administered by Austro-Hungary": whatever that term might mean, though it was solemnly asserted the occupations "would be considered as provisional." The Austrians were also to place garrisons in the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar, thus separating Serbia and Montenegro effectively, and in fact substituting over the Bosniak South Slavs the firmer and more effective Austrian for the haphazard and often weaker Turkish despotism.

VIII. Finally the "Great" Bulgaria of San Stefano was discarded. Instead, a "Little" Bulgaria of about one-third the size originally proposed, was carved out of the lands near the Danube. It was to be "an autonomous and tributary *principality* under the suzerainty of the Sultan." South of this, however, there was also set up a smaller district, "Eastern Roumelia," to be an "autonomous *province,*" more directly under the Ottoman, but with a Christian governor named for a term of five years by the Porte. Thus it was believed the new Bulgaria would be sufficiently weakened so that it could not become an advance post for the Russian advance on Constantinople.

The Treaty of Berlin with its accompanying repulse of Russia raised Beaconsfield's prestige to the heights. His friend the Sultan had received back 30,000 square miles of territory and 2,500,000 subjects to enjoy the blessings of Ottoman administration. At a state reception at Berlin a Russo-Polish princess asked Beaconsfield (the center of all admiration): "What are you thinking of?" "I am not *thinking* at all," came the magnificent answer, "I am merely

[6] This transfer of Cyprus was agreed upon privately, before the Congress met, between Britain and the Porte, and this arrangement was not officially part of the Berlin treaty. Accepting Cyprus as the fee for her services deprived Britain of any claim to much disinterestedness in her attitude, and weakened her claim to Turkish gratitude later.

enjoying myself!" In delight over his work, the Prime Minister returned to England boasting loudly that he brought back "Peace with Honor"!

This Treaty of Berlin with all its faults, and they were patent and grievous, at least gave to the Near East a troubled and sometimes violated armistice until well into the twentieth century.. The President of the conference, Birmarck, who boasted himself merely the "honest broker" of the occasion at the end is reported to have sent for the Turkish delegates. "Well, gentlemen," spoke the shrewd old Prussian, "you ought to be very much pleased. We have secured you a respite of twenty years. You have that period of grace in which to put your house in order. It is probably the last chance the Ottoman Empire will get, and of one thing I am pretty sure,—*you won't take it.*" [7]

If Bismarck spoke thus he was a true prophet. Within twenty years the Ottoman was again in a parlous way. When the respite ended the Iron Chancellor's own Germany was becoming profoundly interested in the disposition of the goods of the Sick Man.

[7] The story may be apocryphal, but fits in well with the probabilities of the case. See Marriot, "Eastern Question," p. 346.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE BALKAN LANDS AFTER THE TREATY OF BERLIN (1878-1908 A. D.)

After the Congress of Berlin adjourned, the cartographers prepared revised maps of the Near East and newspaper readers accustomed themselves to the existence of several apparently new nations. Greece, of course, had been independent earlier, and Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro had existed as self-determining principalities, but Bulgaria, like Athena of old, practically sprang before the world "full armed out of the head of Zeus." Politicians barely knew what to make of her. In 1878 hardly anybody knew that the city of Sophia existed. In 1885 it had apparently become one of the most interesting political capitals in the world. However, since Bulgaria proved the most important of all the Balkan countries during this epoch of transition, her story may be traced more easily after disposing of Roumania and Greece during the three decades, 1878 to 1908.

Roumania: Uneventful Development

Roumania, happily for herself, had the least momentous annals. She was gifted with a capable king (Charles ceased to be a mere "prince" in 1881) and a workable constitution. There were still eager hopes of recovering "Roumania irredenta." Over 500,000 "Romanuls" were under the Russian yoke in Bessarabia and over 2,500,000 in Austro-Hungary, mostly in the Transylvanian province. But Charles and his ministers put aside vain and dangerous dreams. They had at home a sore problem in the poverty-stricken and densely ignorant masses of peasantry, and in the existence of a large Jewish minority, economically important but cordially hated. These classes were distinctly bettered by a wise and earnest effort. Roads and railroads were built. A great bridge was thrown over the Danube connecting the new port of Constanza with the hinterland, and giving to Roumania real access to the sea. Bucharest developed meantime into an elegant modern capital. There were plenty of

problems and troubles always evident in King Charles's kingdom but as the twentieth century advanced it seemed on the whole to form the most prosperous and the best governed of all the Balkan countries.

Greece. The Cretan Problem

In Greece the national energies were centered on a passionate desire to recover the Greek-speaking lands which lay under the Turkish bondage. This desire was intensified by the justifiable fear that if such coveted territories as Epirus and Macedonia (not to mention Thrace and Constantinople) were not speedily brought within Hellendom, some eager rival,—such as old Austria or young Bulgaria,—would devour them forever. The Greeks were therefore constantly tempted to desperate efforts at expansion far beyond their slender physical powers as a nation. They were also driven frantic repeatedly by authentic tales of outrage and massacre concerning their Christian brethren across the Ægean or in the "Great Greek Island" of Crete. Athens was always a city of refugees, and consequently of incessant intrigues and filibustering projects. The Powers did their uttermost to discourage these tendencies. Better to the Quay d'Orsay, the Königstrasse, or Downing Street that many Hellenes should be starved, stripped or slaughtered than that a new war in the Near East should threaten the delicate equilibrium of the general peace of Europe. Some Greek statesmen, notably the distinguished Trikoupes, had the intelligence to repress futile projects, but in 1897 a new outbreak in Crete led to events which brought upon the Greeks a disastrous war, but then ultimately assisted in the expulsion of the Turks from Crete altogether.

Of all the lands refused to the circumscribed kingdom of Greece when it was granted independence, the withholding of Crete had created the most bitter feeling. The majority of the population were Greek Christians but there was a strong Moslem minority quite able to stir up bitter local feuds in addition to the unrest always created by the misgovernment and rapacity of typical Ottoman pashas. Fortunate was the decade in which the shaggy mountain fastnesses of the old realm of Minos were not the scenes of a desperate and bloody insurrection, brutally quenched in the end by Turkish bayonets. The rebellions of 1841 and 1866-1869 were partciularly severe. This last uprising gave anxious thought to the diplomats, and finally in 1878 by the so-called "Pact of Halépa" the Porte

condescended to promise its Cretan subjects a considerable measure of self-government, and also that a large proportion of the revenues

of the island should be spent for local betterments, not sent to Constantinople. The document read excellently. It was executed in the normal Ottoman style, and after a few years the exasperated Christians of Crete renewed their spasmodic insurrections. Finally

in 1896 a peculiarly violent outbreak occurred. The Christian quarter at Canea was burned and sacked by the Moslems. Many Greeks were slaughtered. It was merely another paragraph in what had already become a very long story.

Græco-Turkish War of 1897 A. D. Humiliation of the Greeks

Early in 1897 the excitement, wrath and patriotic enthusiasm which this situation had created in Athens could not be restrained. Greece was ill prepared for war with Turkey. Her army was miserably organized. Her finances could not stand the least strain. All the foreign diplomats warned sternly of the consequences: but King George probably could not have restrained his highly wrought people and have also kept his throne. A Greek torpedo flotilla appeared in Cretan waters, but could effect little, for the naval forces of the "Five Powers" (Germany, the Sultan's friend, holding ostentatiously aloof from any kind of intervention) compelled both Hellenes and Turks to a practical armistice. Matters, however, were now at such a height that bands of eager Greek patriots were raiding across the Thessalian frontier, and violating Turkish territory. On April 17, Abdul-Hamid having taken a true measure of the diplomatic situation declared war, and instantly the Greek bubble burst.

The discipline in the Hellenic army at that time was abominable; while the Turkish forces had been recently reorganized under German instructors. In any case the Greeks would have been sorely outnumbered. The "Thirty Days' War" was for them therefore one series of misfortunes. After obstinate battles on the frontier, Edhem Pasha swept them out of Thessaly. Another stand at Domokos ended in another defeat. The attempts to invade Epirus failed. The Greeks rallied again at Thermopylæ, but whether they could have held that famous pass against a new host from Asia remained doubtful. Their superior fleet wasted its energies in a few futile bombardments.[1] As for the Great Powers they all took an attitude of pitiless discouragement toward the Greek hopes, while Germany openly displayed her sympathies for the Turk. Nevertheless it was no part of European policy to let the Ottoman march to Athens. On May 20, an armistice was signed, and the Powers arranged a treaty of peace which was humiliating enough

[1] Probably the Powers prevented the Greek ships from taking effective action.

for the little kingdom that under sore provocation had struck in behalf of its oppressed brethren in Crete. The Turks indeed evacuated Thessaly, except for certain "strategic rectifications" of the frontier in their favor, but Greece had to pay a war indemnity of some $20,000,000 and place her finances under an International Commission to attend to the payment of this and her other debts. This was a sad anticlimax to all the patriotic fervor with which she had defied the Turk.

Autonomy of Crete. Recovery in Greece

Yet the war was not wholly in vain. The eyes of Europe had been focused upon Crete. Everywhere, save in Germany, there appeared a certain willingness to end an intolerable situation. Late in 1898 the "Five Powers" forced the departure of the last Turkish garrison from the actual island,[2] and offered to Prince George of Greece (second son of King George) the prickly office of "High Commissioner of Crete under the suzerainty of the Sultan." The island at last therefore received very genuine autonomy with a council and a chamber of deputies wherein the Christian element greatly predominated. So the unruly elements were disarmed and a real beginning was made towards peaceful internal development. "For the first time for 1900 years since the Roman conquest," rejoiced an Athenian journalist, "Crete possesses a completely autonomous government." However, the heart's desire of so many Cretans was as yet denied them. They were still nominally the subjects of the Sultan, and the Powers, shivering lest they disturb the technical *status quo* in the Near East, refused to let them become officially "Hellenes."

As for Greece Proper, after the disaster of 1897 matters somewhat calmed down. Earnest and, as it turned out, successful attempts were made to reorganize the army and to improve discipline.[3] The economic condition of the country improved. Politics, however, continued to be violent, sudden and personal. In 1909 a

[2] A very small Turkish garrison was still retained on an islet in Suda Bay. Here the flag of the Padishah was kept flying as a token that Crete was still nominally a part of his Empire.

[3] The Greeks made desperate efforts to improve their army. Considering the population the number of conscripts was very great. But there was much uncertainty in the public mind as to the foe they were to operate against. Bulgaria was looked upon as having left Greece in the lurch in 1897, and as having evil designs upon Macedonia. In 1902 the writer (while in Athens), when commenting on the large number of troops drilling, was assured that they were being prepared quite as much for probable use against the Bulgars as against the Turks "who were bound to go in any case."

"Military League" led by disaffected army and navy officers first endeavored to dictate the composition and policy of the ministry, then with greater wisdom it induced Venizelos, already famous as a public leader of Crete, to come to Athens as its political adviser, and in 1910 King George, as a crowning act of wisdom, asked this distinguished Cretan to become his prime minister. The result was a remarkable strengthening and steadying of national policy, followed by vigorous diplomatic action that was to have its effect not merely on Greece, and the Balkans, but very genuinely upon all Europe. Two years later came that First Balkan War which avenged the defeats of 1897.

First Years of the "New" Bulgaria. Prince Alexander and Russia

While Greece was making this not very joyous history her new Balkan contemporary, Bulgaria, was taking her first hard lessons as an upstanding nation. Russian commissioners administered Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin, and convened a constituent assembly and secured the adoption of a constitution. Perhaps with the deliberate intent of making the country dependent upon Russia, this document was so arranged that although fairly liberal in theory, prince and parliament were pretty sure to collide. The astute Czarists reckoned that as a result each party would be constantly bidding for support from St. Petersburg. It hardly entered their calculations that *both* prince and parliament should at length prefer to compose their feuds and to pursue a nationalist policy without Muscovite countenance.

In 1879 on the recommendation of the Czar the Bulgarians elected as their Prince, Alexander of Battenberg, a German officer of twenty-two "of fine presence, and with plenty of character and brains." His task was no sinecure. An undeveloped territory inhabited by farmers, just delivered from grinding Asiatic oppression, was to be made into a self-respecting country of Europe. The clumsy constitution soon, as had been expected, brought prince and parliament (*Sobranje*) into violent collision. In 1881 the Prince in disgust suspended the "Organic Law" and gave himself "extraordinary powers" for seven years. But in the meantime the attitude of Russia was changing. Czar Alexander II had been murdered. Alexander III was far less friendly personally to his Bulgarian name-

sake. The natives resisted the constant interference of Russians in their internal affairs, while Russians protested loudly of "Bulgarian ingratitude." In 1883 Prince Alexander suddenly restored the "Organic Law." By this time he and his subjects were becoming profoundly conscious of a common national interest when facing the Muscovite.

Eastern Roumelia Joins Bulgaria (1885 A. D.). Anger of Russia

The separation of the Bulgarian people into "Bulgaria" and "Eastern Roumelia" had been an anomaly and an outrage perpetrated at Berlin, chiefly because Beaconsfield imagined that Bulgaria would be practically a Russian province. This it became increasingly clear was anything but the case. Beaconsfield was now dead. His successors in power at London were becoming convinced that a "strong Bulgaria" would be a real hindrance to a Czarist advance across the Balkans. "These newly emancipated races want to breathe free air and not through Russian nostrils," pithily wrote Sir William White in 1885.

The result was an amazing reversal that same year of the diplomatic alignment of 1878. On September 18, 1885, Gavril Pasha, the Turkish Governor General of Eastern Roumelia, was seized in his provincial capital of Philippopolis, haled around the city in a carriage with a Bulgarian school mistress flourishing a naked saber over him, then was shipped away to Constantinople. The insurgents were officers in the Eastern Roumelian army. The entire region supported them. They promptly proclaimed the "Union of the Two Bulgarias," with Alexander as their head. The Prince hesitated to defy Turkey and the protecting Powers, but Stambulov, Speaker of the Chamber, and already the first political influence in Bulgaria, bluntly told him he had better go to Philippopolis or return to Germany. The prince went to Philippopolis. To the surprise of many, the Sultan, instead of sending an army, merely protested. England was advising him to keep quiet. Eastern Roumelia was already nearly lost to him and it would pay Turkey well to embroil Bulgaria with Russia.[4]

But great was the wrath of the Czar at this presumption of the

[4] The Sultan presently settled the matter and saved his face by appointing the Prince of Bulgaria also to be the "Governor General of Eastern Roumelia." So the union of the two regions was painlessly consummated.

"Battenberger." The map of the Balkans was being altered without consulting Russia! "The union [of the Bulgarias] must not take place," wrote the St. Petersburg foreign office to its consuls, "until after the abdication of Prince Alexander." Russia could hardly risk a general war by intervening herself, but at least she did nothing to restrain King Milan of Serbia [5] from stirring up his people to a frantic attempt to "secure recompense" for her neighbor's aggrandisment," by a wholly unprovoked attack upon Bulgaria (November 14, 1885).

Serbian Attack on Bulgaria (1885 A.D.). Abdication of Prince Alexander

Milan was a headlong, immoral prince who counted on an easy victory over the young Bulgarian army, especially as the Czar had recalled all its Russian military instructors. "King of Serbia *and Macedonia!*" the crowds at Belgrade hailed him, when he set forth for the front. But a surprise awaited him and indeed all the world. The Bulgars rose to the occasion and fought magnificently. In the three-days' battle of Slivnitza (before Sophia) they won a complete victory. The Serbs were chased home. Only Austrian intervention saved a Bulgarian march on Belgrade after a "fourteen-days' " war.

The result was inevitably a treaty of peace whereby Serbia shamefacedly recognized the Union with Eastern Roumelia. Slivnitza left Prince Alexander seemingly in a very strong position; but there nevertheless were disaffected elements in his army, open to Russian intrigue. On the night of August 21, 1886, a band of conspirators broke into the palace at Sophia, forced the Prince to sign an abdication and hustled him out of the country. Stambulov and the other nationalist leaders, however, would have nought of the mutineers. They were overpowered, punished, and a provisional government made haste to summon home Alexander. But the Battenberger most indiscreetly sent to the Czar offering to abdicate if the latter felt it desirable. There was no magnanimity in Alexander III of Russia. He promptly replied that he could not approve of the prince's return. The latter felt it useless to continue to struggle against Muscovite opposition. To the great grief of the Bulgars he accordingly abdicated again, and died seven years later as a

[5] Milan had declared himself King in 1882. Very possibly Austria rather than Russia egged him on in this particular adventure against Bulgaria.

mere Austrian army officer. Despite considerable abilities, the situation had been too much for him.

Stambulov Develops Bulgaria. Prince Ferdinand at Sophia (1887-1918 A. D.)

Alexander the Prince thus departed, but Bulgaria the principality remained. The nation had found itself at Slivnitza and was no longer an experiment. For a long time the real ruler of the Bulgars was Stambulov the "strong-man" whose methods were "not those of rosewater." In 1887, despite the frowns of Russia, but with the support of Germany, Austria and England, he induced young Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to adventure himself on the throne at Sophia and for the next seven years Stambulov was indispensable to Ferdinand. The Prime Minister sent certain unwelcome agitators to the firing-squad and had other emphatic methods of silencing opposition, but he did a great work for his country, introducing better agricultural methods, fostering industries and commerce, building railroads, promoting education. In short he went far to make the Rayahs of the old pashaliks into modernized Europeans.

Stambulov, however, outlived his usefulness and created an overabundance of enemies. Prince Ferdinand on his part learned to stand alone. In 1894 he dismissed Stambulov, and henceforth he ruled for himself, shrewdly, and for a long time very successfully, using more pliable ministers. The fallen premier vehemently lamented his fate and defamed his opponents. The result was his assassination in 1895 under circumstances that raised suspicions that the new ministers had no zeal to punish his murderers. However, his better works lived after him: as the twentieth century dawned Bulgaria seemed next to Roumania, the strongest, best governed and most progressive state that had emerged from the crumbling Ottoman Empire, and she was quite ready to discard the nominal vassalage that had bound her to the Porte.

Serbia Under King Milan. King Alexander (1889-1903): His Murder

It remains to consider Serbia. The defeat of 1885 greatly discredited King Milan with his subjects but did not lead to his deposition. The little country was still very poor and in economic subjection to Austria. Without a sea-port: cut off even from friendly Monte-

negro by the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar: dependent for her very life upon Austrian railways,[6] Serbia continued restless and unhappy. Milan was no ruler to increase her prosperity. He was extremely servile in his policy to Austria, probably because of sordid personal inducements. With his wife, Queen Natalie, he had scandalous quarrels that were duly aired before the Kingdom. Finally in 1889 he abdicated in favor of his son, Alexander, then aged thirteen, and spent most of the remainder of his days either at Paris,—busy with the expensive luxuries of opera girls,—or in returning to Belgrade to intrigue for an increase of personal income.

Meantime young King Alexander continued for a while under the control of Regents. A new and more liberal constitution had been proclaimed in 1889, but it had done little to lend stability and dignity to Serbian politics. In 1893 the young King suddenly asserted himself, dismissed the Regents, and reigned in his own name. In 1894 he followed up this act by quashing the constitution of 1889 and reverting to the less liberal organic law of 1869. Enemies of the royal policy were accused from time to time of conspiracies and imprisoned or chased out of the country. For some years this "Czar of Serbians" ruled thus with a high hand, and then a woman undid him.

In 1900 Alexander married a "Madame Draga Mashin, a widow of a Bohemian engineer, and herself of 'Bohemian' tendencies." Soon Belgrade buzzed with scandals (some of them genuine) concerning the new queen. Draga was a beautiful woman, but no heir was born to the marriage and she was said to be intriguing to have her brother made successor to the throne. The king resorted to various desperate measures to restore his popularity. He proclaimed still a new Constitution, more liberal than that of 1869, less liberal than that of 1889; but at length he drove the "Radical" leaders frantic by flagrant acts of autocracy. The result was a truly "Balkan climax" to a very unwholesome story. On the night of June 10, 1903, a band of conspirators (mostly army officers, and including the brother of Draga's first husband) forced in the doors of the Belgrade palace with dynamite, and hunted the king and queen from chamber to chamber. The wretched pair were found crouching

[6] Some time later than this came the famous "Pig War," when Austria forced Serbia into a very disadvantageous treaty by merely mobilizing a few veterinaries on the frontier and declaring all the Serbian swine (the chief article of export) afflicted with a deadly disease. To secure the raising of the ruinous quarantine the Belgrade government capitulated and ratified the treaty.

in a closet where Draga kept her dresses. They were immediately shot in cold blood and their mangled bodies flung out the window. The queen's two brothers, the prime minister and the minister of war were chased down that same night and slain also. So fell the dynasty of the Obrenovich. The next day Belgrade was *en fête*. Church bells rang, flags were strung out, and the bands played dance music in the streets.

Royalist Europe was of course horrified at this deed "brutal, but not unprovoked." Nearly all the diplomats departed. Foreign officers sent back their Serbian decorations. The Austrian Emperor denounced the "heinous and universally reprobated crime." But no power could now prevent the Serbian National Assembly from calling to the throne the Karageorgevich claimant, Prince Peter, now fifty-seven years old whereof forty-five had been spent in exile. He probably had not been directly privy to the plot, but from it assuredly he profited greatly. For some years after this "unhappy incident" Serbia endured the frowns of Europe, but King Peter had the wisdom to act cautiously as a constitutional monarch. Serbian politics at length became less hectic and the country more prosperous. At last 1912 was at hand when the long afflicted South Slavs were able to take a great step towards realizing their dream of national unity.

CHAPTER XXXII

ABDUL HAMID II AND HIS DESPOTISM (1876-1908 A. D.). THE BRITISH DOMINION IN EGYPT

Abdul Hamid II: His Character and Policy

While the new Balkan states were thus painfully groping their way towards something like the Western type of civilization, the Sultan, Padishah and Commander of the Faithful, still bore sway in Stamboul. The Ottoman Empire had been sorely curtailed in Europe, but it nevertheless embraced the great provinces of Thrace (Roumelia), Macedonia, and Albania. In Asia only a few unessential districts in the Caucasus had been torn away by Russia. The Sultan continued to be prayed for as Kalif in all the mosques of the Malay Archipelago, of India, and deep into the heart of Africa. His position was humiliating but it was not yet desperate. At Plevna Turkish armies had taught the world what they could still do under competent commanders. Given a new ruler and a fair degree of good fortune in the diplomatic combinations, the Ottoman Empire might still be salvaged. The potentate who was girded with the "Sword of Osman" in 1876 did not indeed accomplish this difficult feat, but, largely by means which blazen his name among the great criminals of history, he continued to keep his realm from serious outward diminution until his own subjects deposed him in 1908.

Abdul Hamid II at least was no fainéant Padishah, the plaything of favorites, who left cares of the state to his Vizier. He soon made himself feared as one of the shrewdest diplomats of Europe, with an uncanny appreciation of how far it was safe to defy demands pressed upon him, and how to play off the selfish interests of one Western power against another. Seldom issuing from his vast palace by the Bosphorus, the Yildiz Kiosk, this nineteenth-century successor of Mohammed the Conqueror, like some malevolent spider ensconced within his web, played a game of unscrupulous opportunism, endeavoring not by any bold policies, but by a constant run of expedients,

often devilish, to postpone the day of reckoning for the Ottoman Empire.

In former generations England and France had been relied upon by the Porte as steadfast champions against Russia. But after 1870 France was forced more and more to seek the Czar's alliance; and early in the 1880's Britain found herself settling into possession of Egypt and becoming the direct mistress of the Road to India. Britain after this feared Russia less, and after the death of Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone and subsequent prime ministers wasted few words in praises of Ottoman rule. The Sultan therefore needed a new protector. He found one in the new imperial power of Germany.

William II and the German Penetration of the Ottoman Empire

This is no volume wherein to trace that change in the German viewpoint which first led Bismarck in the 1870's to assert: "I never take the trouble even to open the mailbag from Constantinople"; or, in still more famous language: "The whole of the Balkans is not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier"; and then for his supplanter William II to declare in his famous speech at Damascus in 1898, "The 300,000,000 Mohammedans who, dwelling dispersed throughout the East, reverence His Majesty the Sultan Hamid as their Kalif, may rest assured that at all times the German Emperor will be their friend."

On November 1, 1889, the imperial yacht of the Hohenzollerns bore William II through the Dardanelles on his first visit of ceremony to that potentate whom Mr. Gladstone was presently to brand as "the Great Assassin." The Kaiser and those German elements who enjoyed his favor saw in the Turkish Empire not a land to be nibbled away in its outlying parts, as Russia had nibbled in the Caucasus, and as England had nibbled off Egypt, but a large country(for the most part habitable by Europeans) with great economic resources, that could be steadily rendered more and more pliable and useful to aggressive Teutonism; its rulers insensibly swept under a German protectorate, with its markets, mines, and general products becoming ever more subject to German exploitation. The Berlin statesmen demanded no humiliating concession from Turkey, because they expected ultimately to appropriate the entire Ottoman dominions outright. Therefore William II and the Pan-German elements

which followed him, placed the diplomatic and even the material resources of the German Empire pretty unreservedly at the disposal of Abdul-Hamid II.[1]

It was a case of where it promised an incalculable profit to become "the indispensable friend." A very distinguished Prussian soldier and organizer, Baron von der Goltz, did everything possible to rehabilitate the Turkish army. Berlin bankers assisted to float the Padishah's loans. Krupp artillery made impregnable the Dardanelles. Slightly antiquated German battleships were transferred to the Turkish navy in the hopes that it could thus play a creditable part in Levantine waters. In 1902, after long negotiations and ineffective British opposition, the agreement was concluded between the Porte and the German interests for the completion of the much-discussed "Bagdad Railway," which was to link Constantinople with the navigable waters of the Tigris, and with a little extension would reach the Persian Gulf itself. This railway, all the world knew, was merely an important link in that great iron highway from Berlin, through Vienna and Belgrade and Constantinople, by which Hohenzollern policy expected to find a new route clear through to the doors of the Far East; and to "turn the flank of the Great Sea-Empire."

In this situation Russia was weakened by the fact that through much of this period many of her leaders were seeking expansion not towards Constantinople but towards Peking. The Far Eastern adventure which terminated in the disastrous war with Japan (1904-1905) was diverting her energies, as was the personal ascendancy of William II over the weak Czar Nicholas II. St. Petersburg therefore permitted matters in the Levant somewhat to drift. The scanty rewards won in 1877-1878 had also made Russians hesitate to undertake to free any more of the Porte's Christians, lest they prove as "ungrateful" as had Bulgaria. As for the other powers, England stood now on the defensive in her diplomatic and commercial position at Constantinople: France lost even more ground than Britain: and Austria of course had now become the Hohenzollern's diplomatic understudy.

[1] During the height of the Pan-German undertaking to yoke the world of Islam to its projects, every effort was put forth by zealous propagandists to win over the most fanatical Mohammedans. A missionary has told the writer how, about 1905, he heard an ulema explain to an Anatolian crowd that really there were only a few unessential differences between Lutheranism and Orthodox "Sonnite" Islam, and that William II was practically of the same faith as the Padishah at Constantinople. Compare the arguments of Elizabeth's ambassadors as to English Protestantism (p. *227*, nt. 4).

"Abdul the Damned," His Tyranny. The Armenian Massacres (1894-1895 A. D.)

All this was vastly to Abdul-Hamid's liking. He used his new opportunity and friendship with Germany by going the limit in trying to repress within his dominions every suggestion of those unpleasant Giaour agencies which threatened the Ottoman world with another unwelcome change. His were the days when the press censorship in Constantinople was so severe that almost no one would read a Turkish paper—it could contain nothing worth reading; when electric lights could not be used in the capital, because to operate them there was needed a *dynamo;* the Padishah dreaded *dynamite* bombs and prohibited dynamos lest (through similarity of names) they partake of the same atrocious nature; and when chemistry textbooks shipped to American mission-colleges were held up in the Turkish customs lest they contain dangerous political ciphers disguised under scientific symbols.[2]

The climax to these proceedings came in 1894 and 1895 when at the direct instigation of the Sultan the savage Kurds and fanatical Turks of Anatolia were encouraged to massacre some 50,000 to 75,000 helpless and harmless Armenians under circumstances of horror far exceeding that of the Bulgarian massacres of the 1870's. When the Armenians showed feeble signs of resistance, in 1896 the Padishah incited the Moslem populace of Constantinople to massacre fully 6,000 more of them almost at the very doors of the embassies. Abdul-Hamid's motive in all this was probably a base fear lest the Armenians should assert themselves and claim independence in Asia Minor even as had done Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars in Europe. He would exterminate very many of them, and teach the remainder to remember their master.

Ineffective Protests by England. Sultan Supported by Germany

Incidentally he took joy in showing to all the world how helpless were the powers to coerce him. When the massacres took place Russia looked on cynically and contented herself with simply scold-

[2] The most familiar story is perhaps that of the questioning of the chemical symbols H_2O, the well-known formula for water. The sultan's censors promptly discovered that "H" must be the symbol for [Abdul] Hamid, "2" was clearly "II," and "O" was of course the same as "Cipher" or "Nothing"; and the chemistry students were therefore being taught "Abdul-Hamid II equals [or "is good for"] nothing!"—a manifest case of high treason!

ing. She had too many Armenian subjects herself in Trans-Caucasia to care to encourage an Armenian nationalist movement. France would not stir without Russia. Austria did as Potsdam ordered; and Germany did everything but openly commend the Sultan for his resolute way with malcontents. England alone was in a position to act. By the Treaty of Berlin (largely of her dictating) the Porte was bound to give reforms and security to the Armenians; by the special "Cyprus Convention" in return, for British assistance in protecting his Asiatic possessions, the Sultan had specifically obligated himself to Britain to "introduce the necessary reforms" and to "protect" the Christians of Anatolia. Both of these pacts were now treated as pieces of paper by Abdul-Hamid.

The conscience of England was stirred by the massacres. The Sultan was branded as "Abdul the Damned." Mr. Gladstone, in extreme old age, denounced him as "The Great Assassin." There were public meetings, protests, and infinite pamphleteering. But Lord Salisbury, the Tory prime minister, dared not "put it to the touch," and undertake the difficult and possibly bloody task of punishing him, whom a Paris journalist had aptly renamed "The Red Sultan." The danger of "upsetting the equilibrium of Europe" by an active intervention in the Levant was alleged to be great. There were a hundred tender points where "British interests" (mostly financial) might suffer. None of the other powers would openly assist Britain except possibly Italy. Salisbury, therefore, protested, threatened, warned—and did nothing. The result was a stain upon the honor of England, and indirectly a serious diminution of British prestige throughout the Levant.[3]

In 1898 William II visited "his brother," the Red Sultan again. He had fine and friendly words for the very pashas who had superintended the Armenian massacres. At Damascus he made his famous speech (earlier quoted) announcing his intense friendship for the Moslem world. Abdul-Hamid had defied England, had taught his

[3] Viewing these Armenian massacres in retrospect across now a considerable time, I desire to record the deliberate judgment that the inaction of Salisbury in this crisis was one of the most discreditable blunders ever committed by an Anglo-Saxon statesman. Considering the history of the past, the responsibility for ending the hideous situation was unmistakably Britain's; that responsibility was willfully evaded, either out of sheer cowardice or out of a stony-heartedness, exhibiting the British public character in a distressing aspect.

Wrote an indignant Englishman [Richard Davey]: "Surely we must account ourselves well-nigh as blameworthy for these horrors as Abdul-Hamid himself! We deluded the luckless Armenians by our unsteady policy, and for all the tall talk of our newspapers and the shrieks of our public meetings, we have not saved a single Armenian child from a terrible death."

subjects a lesson, and had cemented German friendship. His reign was proceeding with glory.

Misrule and Oppression of the Moslem Ottomans. Revolt Against the Sultan (1908 A. D.)

So the Sultan snapped his fingers at the miscalled "Powers." His resolute treatment of the Armenians taught his Christian subjects the virtues of silent obedience. But to his own hurt he also oppressed his Moslem subjects. The paper Constitution, proclaimed early in his reign, had been promptly suspended as soon as it was clear that its servile and comically inept Parliament could not be taken by Europe as evidence that Turkey had suddenly become an enlightened country. Abdul-Hamid the Damned therefore ruled as absolutely as had Bayezid I. But he spent his days in dread of his own Ottomans. A host of spies haunted the movements of every well-born Turk suspected of the least original thinking or of willingness to receive western notions.[4] The army was usually ill-paid. The ironclads were rusting. The finances of the Empire were sinking ever deeper in disorder, but the Sultan always found money for his secret agents. There were murders unavenged, sudden disappearances, abrupt exilings. Such a monarch could not of course rule without the aid of numerous proper myrmidons, and Abdul-Hamid had to surround himself with Levantine adventurers of the most sordid type, brazen in their extortions and crimes because they knew themselves indispensable to their master.

The year 1908 showed this Padishah still in the marble recesses of the Yildiz Kiosk fanned by his eunuchs and concubines, patronized by the German ambassador, defiant of the rest of the world, and confident after thirty years of successful tyranny. The Levant appeared to be more sodden in degenerate Orientalism in 1908 than it had seemed in 1876. Then of a sudden the ground rose up at Abdul-Hamid's feet and smote him. For years there had been a party of "Young Turks," an increasing group of Ottomans who had

[4] Of course these spies to earn their salaries manufactured every possible accusation against harmless Ottomans. The ten years preceding 1908 seem to have been, at Constantinople, spent in an atmosphere of suspicion and terror quite as grievous for most Moslems as for their Christian neighbors.

Abdul-Hamid's agents abounded in every European capital where disaffected Turks foregathered. It is alleged they also worked in America. The Sultan doted upon their confidential reports. In 1903 the French government put pressure upon him by the simple expedient of expelling the Turkish spies from Paris. The exiles could now, unreported, conspire to their hearts' content! In terror the Sultan acceded to the French demands.

become partly impregnated with Western notions, who had "imbibed atheism and absinthe" at Berlin and Paris, and who were resolved to end a situation intolerable for themselves (the constant victims of espionage and denunciation) and increasingly dangerous for their country. The situation between the hostile races in Macedonia had become so menacing to the peace of the Balkans that it was known that England and Russia were discussing actual intervention, which act surely meant a new dismemberment of the Empire:—something that spurred the Young Turks to extra energy.

A "Committee of Union and Progress" agitated from Paris. In 1906 it became bold enough to transfer its work directly to Salonica. Many of the leaders of the "Young Turks" were army officers. They did their work with extreme skill. Abdul-Hamid had rewarded certain guard regiments liberally, but the rest of his troops were ill-paid, ill-fed, and in a mood to listen to vehement counselings. The general mistreatment of the Moslem population by the Sultan's myrmidons had also become nearly as bad as the mistreatment of the Christians, and the former had had no Western governments even to protest in their behalf. Therefore the conspiracy prospered apace: and all Abdul-Hamid's host of so-called spies failed to bring him correct tidings in time for effective measures. On July 3, 1908, the revolution broke out in Macedonia. On April 27, 1909, the "Red Sultan" was Sultan no longer.

Egypt Under the Khedives: Debt and Disorder

Abdul-Hamid had been the more inclined to seek a German protector because of the action of the old benefactor of the Ottomans in spoiling them of another part of their dominions. During the 1880's Britain had planted herself in Egypt.

Since Mehemet Ali's time the Sultan had indeed enjoyed little more than titular lordship over the old Land of the Pharaohs, but in the Orient the name and prestige are everything. The successors of Mehemet Ali were "hereditary pashas," who had at length induced their suzerain at Constantinople to honor them with the more exalted title of "*Khedive*" (="Viceroy"). In the 1870's this Khedive was Ismail, a potentate with a superficial admiration for Western methods and manners, although his country was, if anything, a little more exploited and oppressed than the average Turkish province. Ismail was a reckless borrower and an absolutely careless

spender. He fell into the power of a coterie of bankers—French, German, and Jewish—who assisted him to pawn practically the entire revenues and assets of the country, including finally in 1875 his interest in the Suez Canal (completed under French auspices by De Lesseps in 1869). Disraeli by a lightning coup bought up these shares for the British government. Henceforth England had a direct part-ownership in the new waterway to India, and a very direct interest in the good order of the Nile Valley.

By 1879 Ismail's financial troubles and misrule reached the point that the powers put pressure on the Sultan to depose him, and the latter (glad to teach his vassal his real place) sent a famous telegram to "Ismail Pasha, *late* Khedive of Egypt," bidding him hand over his power to his son Tewfik. Ismail therefore retired to a luxurious exile in Naples.[5]

British Intervention and Occupation (1882 A. D.). The Mahdi in the Sudan

Tewfik "succeeded to a bankrupt state, an undisciplined army, and a discontented people." When French and British financial advisers tried to improve matters by economies imperiling the fat posts of sundry officers there was instant disaffection. The poor taxpaying peasants stirred not, but a certain Colonel Arabi roused the army against the foreigners and practically made himself dictator with the Khedive at his mercy. Soon Christians were being pillaged and murdered especially in Alexandria, and Mr. Gladstone's government proposed to France a joint intervention to end a situation which promised to plunge all Egypt into anarchy. The Third Republic very unwisely (as Frenchmen later confessed with sorrow) refused to act in company with its English rival. In July, 1882, therefore, the British fleet bombarded Alexandria and silenced Arabi's batteries. In September, as the next step, an army of British regulars led by Lord Wolseley landed on the Suez Canal and advanced on Cairo. Arabi met them with superior numbers at Tel-el-Kebir, but after one sharp struggle the wretched fellah infantry broke and ran. The last courage oozed out of the Khedivial army. Five hundred English horsemen rode into Cairo, and the 11,000

[5] He was allowed to take with him "part of his harem,"—and did so by taking *three hundred* ladies to Naples. On this horde of women he had squandered an incalculable quantity of Paris gowns, costly porcelain and jewels, elaborate furniture, etc., thus eating up the revenues of Egypt.

troops of the garrison surrendered with hardly a shot. By stress of circumstances and not by any willful machination Britain was now fairly in Egypt, the key to the East and to India.

British statesmen protested sincerely that they intended to evacuate Egypt the moment the country could safely be left to itself.[6] Complications, however, followed apace. Everything in Egypt demanded amendment from the irrigation system to an administration of justice, which was a haphazard admixture of bastinadoes and bribery. Meantime, on the Upper Nile a fanatic, the "Mahdi," was leading the negroid Sudanese into a wholesale revolt against Khedevial authority in the barbarous province of "Equatoria." How in 1884 the British government resolved to evacuate the Sudan and sent "Chinese Gordon" to bring away the civilized folk and garrison of Khartoum, the provincial capital; how Gordon failed to do this, but was hemmed in, and after a dramatic siege, killed early in 1885 just as a relief expedition approached Khartoum; how for thirteen years the Sudan was abandoned to the "Mahdist" fanatics; and how finally Sir Herbert Kitchener led a joint English and Egyptian force southward, mowed down the Mahdists with his magazine rifles and machine guns at Omdurman near Khartoum (September 1, 1898), avenged Gordon, broke the power of the fanatics, and restored Equatoria to contact with civilization—this is a part of English and African history, rather than that of the Near East. But the Mahdist peril in the south, which threatened even to sweep down the whole Nile valley, added to the purely Egyptian reasons why British regiments should remain in Cairo, and British "advisers" continue to give counsels hard to disregard to the Khedive and his native officials.

From 1882, therefore, down to the World War and beyond it, England retained her hold on Egypt, accomplishing a great work for civilization through one of the ablest administrators ever sent from her shores—Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer), who as "agent" and "Consul General" was practically the ruler of the Nile Valley from 1883 to 1907.[7] An element among the upper-class natives

[6] Writing after an interval of forty years, I think even bitterly anti-British writers will admit that, in 1882 and for not a little time after, England would have evacuated Egypt could she have found any reasonable way of so doing.

[7] Sir Evelyn Baring, who presently became better known as Lord Cromer, was a man of astonishing ability; indeed, he ranks abong the greatest and worthiest of the British proconsuls, but he was not without "an abruptness of manner and a certain

raised their demand indeed—"Egypt for the Egyptians"—but neither they, nor the long continued protests of France could force out the British. The willingness of the latter to withdraw indeed became ever less, so long as the Pan-German menace to their whole Empire increased. Egypt therefore continued nominally as a pashalik of the Turkish Empire, with a Khedive who was the lieutenant of the Sultan. Actually she had become pretty strictly a British protectorate, and in 1914, when Turkey declared war, Britain promptly proclaimed that the last tie between Egypt and the Porte was sundered.

In 1922 the British announced the "Independence" of Egypt, but with marked reservations looking to the maintenance of the good government of the country and the protection of the sea-route to India. The "Sultan" of Egypt (successor to the old Khedives) still appeared far from being a complete master of his own house.

Note on Modern Constantinople, "Stamboul"

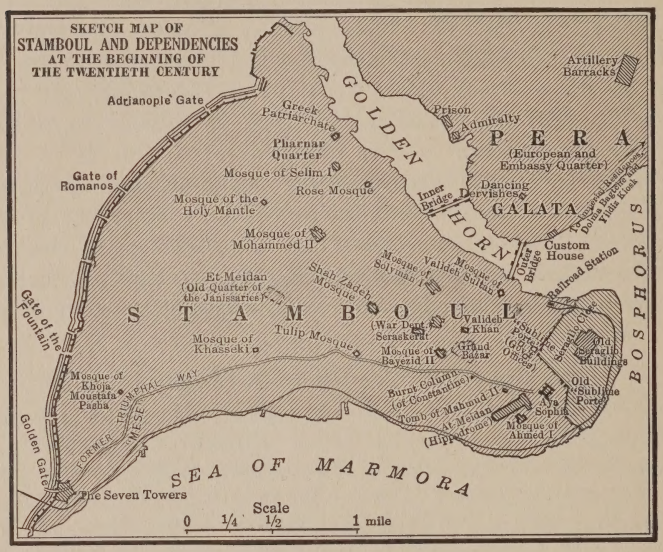
In view of the abundance of recent travel literature a description of Modern Constantinople (corresponding with that of "Byzantine Constantinople") is here superfluous. The city retained its mediæval and Eastern aspect fairly well down to about 1830. Then, following the alleged "reforms" of Mahmud II, a rapid if superficial "Europeanizing" began. Many buildings were constructed or reconstructed in Western style: streets were widened, and at length a tramway system was introduced, while out of a railway station near the Golden Horn express trains presently rolled away to Vienna, Berlin and Paris. Galata and Pera became decidedly Occidentalized suburbs abounding with most of all that for good or for evil "Western civilization" had to offer. Partially successful efforts were also made to improve the sanitary condition of the city, and just before the World War even the familiar hordes of street dogs were ordered to be banished.

North of the Golden Horn the Sultans usually resided in the elegant modern palaces of Dolma Bagtche or Yildiz Kiosk ("Star Kiosk"), almost relegating to the status of a museum their old habitation, the famous "Seraglio" palace, erected after the Ottoman conquest on the site of the "Great Palace" of the Byzantines at the eastern extremity of the city proper. However the picturesque minarets (introduced after 1453) rising over the multitudinous mosques of "Stamboul," the heterogeneous population, Islamic and Christian, in the streets; the babel of tongues; as well as the tawdriness,

autocracy of demeanor" which impeded his success with Orientals and added to British unpopularity. An English colleague wrote of him slyly:

"The virtues of Patience are known,
But I think when put to the touch,
The people of Egypt will own with a groan
There's an *Evil in Baring* too much!"

glitter and squalor in so many quarters, still tended to mark Constantinople as a unique city,—in Europe yet hardly of it: but nevertheless now too fully invaded by the "improvements" of the West to claim fairly to represent the opposing genius of Asia.



CHAPTER XXXIII

THE YOUNG TURKS AND THE BALKAN WARS (1908 TO 1913)

The Young Turk Revolution. Loss of Suzerainty Over Bulgaria and Bosnia (1908 A. D.)

As this long narrative approaches its end, one must treat in an increasingly annalistic manner the events which led to a new partition of the Ottoman Empire and to the virtual completion of the age-long task of expelling the Moslem aliens from Europe.

In July, 1908, at the instigation of the Young Turks' "Committee of Union and Progress" the Salonica army revolted and demanded the immediate putting into effect of the long suspended "Constitution of 1876." Caught completely off his guard and uncertain even of the loyalty of the Constantinople garrison, Abdul-Hamid apparently threw up the struggle with surprising promptitude and transformed himself into a strictly "Constitutional" monarch. The censorship of the press suddenly ended, and a general election was ordered for the new chamber of deputies—280 members chosen by the franchises of all the male citizens (regardless of creed) in the entire Empire.

For a few happy weeks Moslem, Christian, and Jew fraternized together, rejoicing in that strange thing called "freedom." Ulemas publicly embraced priests. Delegates besought American missionaries to explain how "liberty" worked in republican lands. "Henceforth," proclaimed Enver Bey, a Young Turk leader, "we are all brothers! There are no longer Greeks, Jews, Moslems: under the blue sky we are all equal. We glory in the name of being Ottomans!" [1]

The Parliament convened. There was abundant good will and flowery oratory, but also much of political inexperience. The young Turks' committee, however, named the ministers, and practically

[1] This same super-liberal Enver Bey shared a large degree of the responsibility for the slaughter or miserable deaths of some 1,000,000 Armenians in 1915-16 (see p. 383).

dictated the legislation. For the moment all went finely. But Abdul Hamid, crafty spider, was watching his chance. All the noxious corrupt elements that had battened upon the fallen régime were alarmed; so too were the conservative old-line Turks who saw in the Young Turks so many renegades full of Giaour theories and ruining the faith of the true Moslems. Besides, the diplomatic air was thick with happenings which filled all Ottomans with wrath. In October, 1908, Austria-Hungary proclaimed her annexation of the long "occupied" Bosnia. Behind Austria was manifestly Germany. Serbia indeed was even more incensed than Turkey. The latter only lost a nominal possession, but Serbia saw her Bosniak brethren consigned forever to Hapsburg thralldom. Nevertheless, Russia (Serbia's sponsor among the Powers) dared not fight both Austria and Germany. Serbia raged but was helpless, and Turkey was equally helpless.

Almost at the same instant Ferdinand of Bulgaria proclaimed himself the full-fledged "King" ("Czar") of a completely independent country. The Porte again could do nothing but protest, and then presently negotiate with its one-time vassal, conceding Bulgarian independence in return for the assumption of part of the Ottoman debt.

Abdul Hamid Attempts Reaction; Army Revolts and Deposes Him (1909 A. D.)

The Young Turks were not to blame for these things, but they shook the prestige of the new régime, while Abdul Hamid wove his intrigues and placed his money skillfully. On April 13, 1909, the Parliament house was seized by counter-revolutionary elements and the Young Turk leaders fled for their lives from Constantinople, while the Sultan's creatures filled up all the ministries.

Abdul the Damned could triumph thus far, but he had no hold on the bulk of the army. The Salonica divisions marched straight on the capitol. Only a few regiments remained loyal to the hated Padishah, and had to be cannonaded into surrender in their barracks. "Have you brought us the old man's head?" demanded the general of the victorious army, when parleys were attempted. But the Young Turkish leaders did not care to martyrize their foe before the conservatives. On April 27, the reconvened Parliament listened to the fetveh of the Sheik-ul-Islam (or Grand Mufti) declaring that

the Red Sultan had forfeited the throne. Promptly his younger brother, kept for decades helpless and ignorant in gilded captivity, was proclaimed Sultan as Mohammed V.[2] The new Padishah confessed that he "had not read a newspaper for twenty years." This qualification made him an almost ideal monarch from the Young Turks' viewpoint. Enver Bey and his associates now ruled the Empire in the name of an amiable, helpless puppet. Abdul-Hamid disappeared in luxurious exile at Salonica, but some forty of his leading myrmidons, extortioners, and instigators of the recent mutiny were hanged in public view along the bridges and streets of Stamboul. Henceforth the "Committee of Union and Progress" could impose its will freely upon the realm of the Ottomans.

For a few glad months liberals throughout the world congratulated themselves that a new and happier day had dawned for the Levant. The Young Turks soon, however, showed themselves to be true sons of Turan and Inner Asia under a thin Western veneer. They recognized rightly that the great difficulty in governing the Empire lay in the exceeding diversity of races, and of religious legal systems, but they were completely incapable of hitting upon any reasonable arrangement whereby Turk, Kurd, Arab, Jew, Greek, Armenian, and Syrian could exist happily together. They deliberately undertook to force all the non-Turkish races to become in language, laws, habits, and almost all other particulars "Ottomans." Christians were not indeed actually compelled to foreswear their religion, but they were to be "Turkified" in almost everything else. In Syria and Arabia the Moslem natives (of proud old Arabian descent) received this process of "Turkification" almost as reluctantly as did the Armenians and Greeks. The natural results of such a ramrod policy were disaffection, revolts, and, presently, disastrous foreign wars.

Italy and the War for Tripoli (1911 A. D.) Disaffection in Albania and Macedonia

The first of the Young Turks' external calamities came from Italy. The Italians had a rather vague claim for the "peaceful penetration" of Tripoli, the strip of North African coast between Egypt and

[2] Doubtless Abdul-Hamid preened himself on the fact that he had not executed his brother. The imprisonment of the heirs to the Empire under circumstances which precluded them from ever being effective rulers was perhaps an even greater crime against the weal of the state.

Tunis which was still ruled directly from Constantinople. In 1911 the Rome government having made sure of the diplomatic situation and being well informed as to the blunders of the new régime at Constantinople, on September 26, demanded the right to occupy Tripoli "under the suzerainty of the Sultan." A forty-eight-hour time limit was set to these demands. The Turks rejected them with fury. The Italians declared war, took Tripoli by force, and their navy prevented any successful effort by the Turks to save the isolated province. The Moorish tribes of the interior indeed made much trouble for the invaders, and out of regard for Austria Italy refrained from any serious attacks upon the Ottoman territories in Europe and Asia: nevertheless the utter weakness of the Young Turkish régime was advertised to the world. After vain procrastination the Porte signed the Treaty of Lausanne with Italy, October 18, 1912, by which the Ottomans relinquished the last of their African possessions. They had great need to make haste. Their very existence in Europe was now in danger.

The new régime at Constantinople had early in 1912 added to its troubles by making a blundering and ill-timed attempt to "Turkify" Albania. The clansmen, Christian and Moslem, had flown to arms at the threat of being brought under a system of laws, taxation, and army conscription which the most arbitrary Sultans had never tried to impose upon their valleys. Albania was still unsubdued when a greater thunder-cloud lowered. The "Macedonian problem" was demanding a settlement. Here in the native lands of Philip and Alexander, wedged in between Greece, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Thrace, were thrust sections of practically *all* the peoples of the Balkan peninsula. "Macedonia," pungently wrote an Italian investigator, "has for two thousand years been the dumping ground of different peoples, and forms, indeed, a perfect ethnographic museum."

The Balkan League Against Turkey (August 26, 1912)

By 1912 Turkish lack of rule or deliberate misrule had reached a climax and repeated protests by the Powers at the situation had produced nothing but voluminous state papers. The various brands of Christians in Macedonia indeed hated each other vehemently and often carried on petty wars, but for once they were somewhat willing to forget their feuds and unite against a common oppressor.

Also in Belgrade, Sophia, Cettigne, and Athens the fear was growing simultaneously that Austria, having, in defiance of the Berlin treaty, absorbed Bosnia, was now about to seize Macedonia—to the general ruin of the hopes of all the new Balkan nations. The result was that a thing which the Western (and especially the Austro-German) diplomats had counted as impossible, actually came to pass. For almost *the first time in Balkan history*, Greeks, Bulgars, and South Slavs united genuinely against a common enemy. The union, unhappily, did not endure long. All the human elements soon reverted to type. But the combination lasted long enough to work woe for the Ottoman.

On August 26, 1912, the "Four Allies" (Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece) signed a treaty for common action against the Porte. Among the authors of the pact, Venizelos, already famous as the premier of Greece, is ordinarily given the chief glory. The Great Powers now solemnly warned the Balkan states to keep the peace. They went so far as to assure them officially that if they actually dared to go to war and by any chance won any Ottoman territory, the Powers would not permit "at the end of a conflict any modification of the territorial *status quo* in European Turkey." [3] In a few months there was proclaimed the real value of this highly official warning, and the Allies from the start correctly gauged its importance.

Outbreak of First Balkan War (October, 1912 A. D.). General Defeat of the Turks

The Young Turks on their part refused all suggestions of conciliation. Military experts, Germans in particular, with the defeat of the Greeks in 1897 in mind, earnestly predicted an Ottoman victory, but the Balkan Allies (confident that nothing would succeed like success, and that Russia and England were at least in a fairly friendly mood) drove straight ahead. The "First Balkan War" began thus by an advance of the Montenegrins into Albania on October 18, 1912. On paper the four Allies numbered together only 10,000,000 inhabitants, and faced a foe with at least 25,000,000 population. But the little Christian states for once were desper-

[3] Russia very possibly was not extremely vehement in this warning. The mere fact that Germany had been so friendly with the Porte made the Czarist statesmen very willing to have the latter taught a lesson, and a defeat of Turkey would (under the circumstances) be a blow to German prestige all through the Levant.

ately in earnest. They mobilized very large armies and in the spirit of true crusaders turned passionately upon the Infidels who had harried them so long. Bulgaria sent to the front 300,000 men: Serbia and Greece at least 150,000 each: Montenegro some 50,000. The Turks, with all their boasts and their fine German mobilization plans, could not assemble much over 400,000. The superior Greek navy kept them from transporting these troops by water and forced them to depend on insufficient railways and on very poor highways. The Ottoman reservists lacked decent clothing and equipment. Worse still, the Turkish commissary department absolutely broke down. Many regiments were starving before they were sent into battle.

The main attack towards Constantinople had of course to be made by the Bulgars. Instantly the bubble of Ottoman military prestige was burst. In Thrace, at Kirk Kilisse, the Turks were swept in rout from their positions (October 23). On October 28 they attempted a more decisive stand at Lule Burgas. Here 175,000 men on a side wrestled for a long two days in deadly grips. Then the French-made artillery of the Bulgars got in its work. On October 31 the whole Ottoman army fled as a disorganized rabble towards Constantinople. If the Bulgars had not been exhausted by their victory they could have marched straight into the capital.

Turks Lose Macedonia and Epirus. Vainly Renew the War. Treaty of London (May 1, 1913)

Meantime in Macedonia and Epirus the Serbs and Greeks had been playing their part. The large Turkish army opposed to the Serbs was routed like its comrades in Thrace. On November 18, Monastir surrendered and the South Slavs took 40,000 prisoners. Meantime, on November 9, the Greeks (changed into disciplined soldiers by skillful French instructors) after defeating the Ottoman forces in Thessaly had the joy of entering Salonica, that city lost by Christendom to Islam in 1430. The Turks presently indeed rallied sufficiently in Thrace to strengthen the "Tchatalja lines" covering Constantinople between the Black Sea and the Marmora, and to turn back some not very vigorous Bulgar attacks: but by December, 1912, the Ottomans had hardly a rod of soil left them in Europe outside of Constantinople, the Gallipoli peninsula, Adrianople (closely besieged by the Bulgars), and one or two other

fortresses in Epirus and Albania equally closely besieged by the Greeks and Montenegrins. Early in December, therefore, fortunate that they still held their capital, the demoralized Turks signed an armistice. Peace commissioners were to meet in London to decide the fate of the erstwhile "Turkey-in-Europe."

The Ottoman plenipotentiaries inevitably struggled against the logic of the military situation and inevitably they succumbed. The victorious Allies demanded of their foes practically the evacuation of Europe save the Eastern fraction of Thrace. The Powers, even Turkophile Germany, dared not take on themselves the odium of handling lands inhabited mostly by Christians back to Moslem bondage. In desperation a faction of the Young Turks now caused the assassination of Nizam Pasha, the leading "peace" minister at Constantinople, and strove to renew the war. The army, however, was in no condition to take the offensive. Adrianople and the other isolated fortresses succumbed. The humiliating armistice had to be renewed: and on May 1, 1913, the Ottoman envoys sorrowfully signed the Treaty of London. The Sultan ceded Crete to Greece. He left the other Ægean Isles "to the decision of the Great Powers" (i.e., they were practically certain to fall to Greece), and in general he ceded to his foes all his former dominions in Europe west of the "Enos-Midia" line, drawn across Thrace some distance behind Constantinople.

The Balkan Allies had thus won an astonishing victory in the face of many diplomatic frowns from Western Europe, and of the constant predictions of Ottoman success by the German military "experts." The Sick Man of Europe had almost been forced back to Asia. There were to be no more downtrodden Rayahs in Macedonia. The four Allies were all to receive extensive and legitimate extensions of territory. The Balkan War, therefore, seemed to justify its heavy cost in blood and treasure by the blessings it was to bring upon a much afflicted peninsula.

Break Between the Allies: Bulgaria vs. Serbia and Greece

What followed was a pitiful commentary on human frailty, and especially upon the inability of "civilized" man to reconcile the collisions of sordid interests and passions. One of the reasons the Turks had dared to procrastinate and to renew the war had been the vain hope that the Allies were about to fly asunder. That

schism, however, did not occur until the defeated Ottomans had been compelled to sign the Treaty: but the chasms between the lately "beloved Comrades-in-Arms" yawned wide almost as soon as the ink on the new pact was dry.

In truth the Allies had been far more victorious than originally they had dreamed. They had perhaps hoped to win a few thousand square miles of land apiece for themselves and to secure a Christian governor for Macedonia: and lo! they had now thrust upon them the task of dividing nearly the whole of Turkey-in-Europe. The real difficulty of the new situation lay in Albania and Macedonia. One of the prime objects of the Serbs in the war had been to win an ocean port to secure their economic independence. They had actually held for a few hopeful days the harbor of Durazzo by the bright Adriatic. But the seizure of such a port involved driving a strip of Serbian territory clear across Albania, thus constituting an absolute blockade to very many Austrian schemes for southern expansion. Italy, too, was very loath to see a young, aggressive Slavic power plant herself at the southern end of the Adriatic—already marked out by the Rome politicians to be an Italian lake. The result was that Austria, sustained here by Italy (and of course for diplomatic reasons by Germany) interposed an absolute veto upon Serbia's obtaining an ocean frontage. Albania was to be set up (so the Great Powers agreed) as an independent "principality," nominally in order to gratify the desire of the Albanians for a national life apart from the hated Slavs, actually to promote Austria's jealousy of anything which made Serbia an economically independent nation.[4]

This mandate against annexing any material part of Albania naturally forced Serbia, and to a less extent Greece, to seek compensation elsewhere. In the compacts made just before the war it had been agreed that Bulgaria should have a very large fraction of Macedonia. But Greece (balked in schemes to annex most of Epirus) as well as Serbia now pressed for a revision of the agreement. Was Bulgaria to reap nearly *all* the fruits of the war—including most unexpected annexations in Thrace,—while her allies,

[4] The Powers selected Prince William of Wied as Prince of Albania. This gentleman had the prime qualification of being a Protestant, and so he could not be charged with favoring his Moslem, Greek, or Catholic subjects,—there not being one native Protestant in all Albania! Hardly was he installed in office ere the Great War broke out. Bereft of outside aid, his power was promptly defied by the lawless highlanders. In 1914 this very inadequate successor of Scanderberg abdicated his "throne" in disgust, and Albania at once lapsed back to her unspoiled barbarism.

whose help had been very essential, were to win relatively little? The moral case for a revision of the treaty, to say the least, was very strong. But the Bulgarian leaders, who so far had played their military and diplomatic cards admirably, were swelled with pride. They apparently believed that they could appropriate *both* Macedonia and Thrace, and leave, especially to Serbia, next to nothing. They were also quarreling about the possession of Salonica with the Greeks who had originally won the city. The Bulgars furthermore were undoubtedly being egged on by sinister Austro-German influences to adopt an extreme policy, for the one hope now of reëstablishing Teutonic prestige and power in the Balkan peninsula was to get the native races to divide.[5]

Second Balkan War (June-July, 1913 A. D.). Bulgaria Defeated: Roumania Intervenes

Under these circumstances Russia for once used all her diplomatic influence for peace, Nicholas II earnestly offering himself as arbiter: but Bulgar ambition, blown hot by German intrigues, was too powerful. In the face now of plain threats of danger, Greece and Serbia concluded a special alliance. It turned out they had done so just in time, for, on the night of June 29, 1913, while negotiations were still proceeding and without the slightest warning, the Bulgars made a general attack along the whole Greek and Serbian lines in Macedonia.

King Ferdinand, Savoff his general, and the Bulgarian military leaders who were now dictating the national policy, apparently reckoned that by one crude, faithless blow they could remake the map of the Balkan lands in their own favor. They were as self-deceived as were the arrogant Young Turks they had just defeated. Their attack was decisively repulsed. All the brutal passions latent in the Balkan races of course flamed up. The Serbs and Greeks flung themselves into this fraternal struggle with explosive energy. The Serbs fought to avenge Slivnitza: the Greeks to show that they did not owe Salonica to any borrowed valor. Both races defeated the Bulgar armies opposed to them. The battles and general warfare were hideously bloody. A thousand ancient grudges were being

[5] In fairness to Bulgaria it should be stated that Bulgars apparently constituted the largest single element in these Macedonian lands. The races all interlapped in a most confusing manner. This, however, was an additional reason for not precipitating war until all peaceful means had been exhausted.

traded out:[6] but in any event in less than two weeks after this unpardonable "Second Balkan War" began the Bulgars were being thrust back into their own land, and crowded hopelessly upon the defensive.

What now suddenly cut this struggle mercifully short was the lightning intervention of Roumania. King Charles's government had earlier insisted that Bulgaria should make "compensations" in the Dobrudja to Roumania for her own great gains to the South. Bulgaria had grudgingly suggested a few meager concessions, but the Bucharest leaders cannily bided their time. The moment their southern neighbor was fairly at grips with her old allies, Roumania struck. On July 10, she declared war and her powerful army poured over the Danube. It was a cold, non-moral proceeding, of course, but recent Balkan politics had provided no schools in international virtue.[7]

Treaty of Bucharest (August 10, 1913 A.D.). Humiliation of Bulgaria

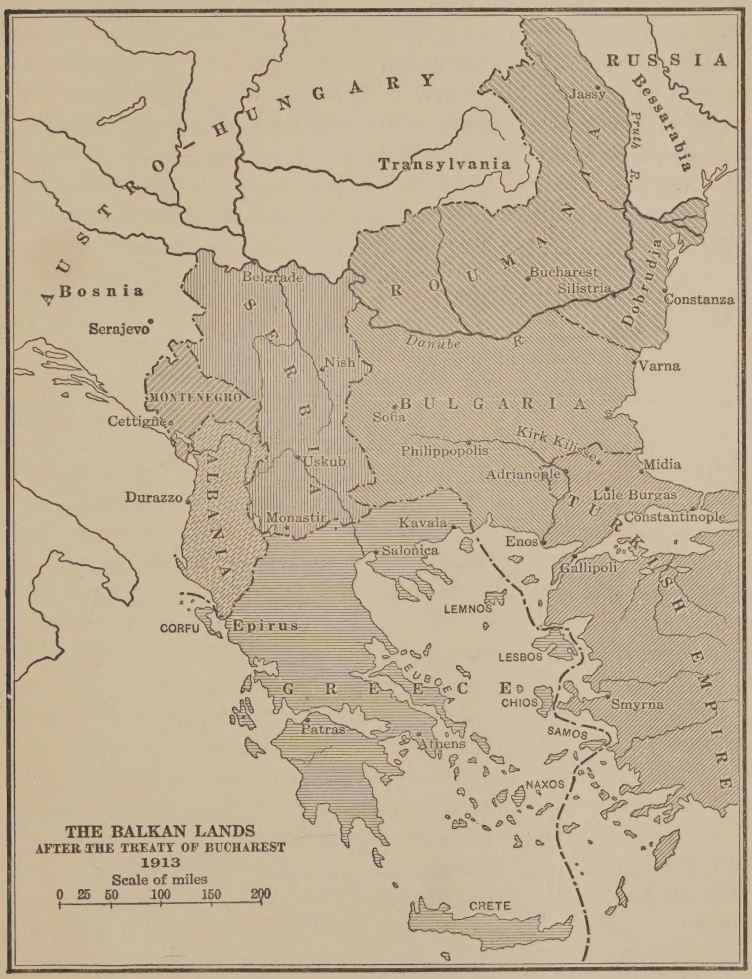
The Roumanians were playing a safe game. Defeated already in the South, the Bulgars had hardly a regiment to place against their formidable northern rival. The Young Turks seized the opportunity to muster troops enough to retake Adrianople before its new Bulgarian administrators had been able to settle in their offices. To avoid seeing hostile armies in Sofia, Czar Ferdinand and his ministers therefore resigned themselves to their fate. On July 30, yet another armistice was signed. The envoys of the Balkan powers met at Bucharest, and there Bulgaria had to subscribe to a new treaty which was practically dictated by her foes. She was excluded from those parts of Macedonia which she had coveted the most, and she saw Adrianople and its district revert to the Turks. Never had an international crime met with more sudden or more dramatic punishment.

So ended the two Balkan wars. In them about 348,000 men had been killed. Turkey in Europe (even after recovering Adri-

[6] Each side brought charges against their foes of abominable massacres of innocent civilians. A candid investigation seems to reveal that nearly *all* these charges were well founded. Few wars (length considered) so degenerated into general deviltry as this "Second Balkan War." The responsibility for its precipitation, however, is clearly with Bulgaria.

[7] Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria is said to have remarked considerably earlier: "That if the Balkan countries were governed by brigands, *he* intended to have the brigands on his side." Most Balkan rulers have acted according to this dictum.

anople) had now shrunken from 65,300 square miles and 6,130,000 people to some 10,900 square miles with only 1,900,000 inhabitants. Roumania gained at the expense of Bulgaria 2687 square miles with



286,000 inhabitants. Montenegro's gains were 2125 and 230,000 respectively: Serbia's 15,000 and 1,500,000: and Greece (including Crete and the islands) received 18,000 and 1,700,000: while Bul-

garia was allowed to keep a strip of coastland along the Ægean and made indeed a net gain of 9660 square miles, but of only 125,000 inhabitants.

Thus the Treaty of Bucharest reduced "Turkey-in-Europe" to a mere fraction of ancient Thrace. Another "final map" of the Balkans was officially published: but no one knowing the passions which the criminal "Second War" had aroused, the shattered ambitions of Bulgaria, the wrath in Austria at the new power of Serbia, the wrath in Serbia at the failure to secure a seaport, and finally the bursting desire of the Pan-Germans in Prussia to remould the whole Balkan peninsula to their own advantage, could look on this dictated treaty as anything but an unstable truce.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE BALKANS AND THE LEVANT IN THE WORLD WAR (1914-1918)

The Near East in the Summer of 1914 A. D.

The Treaty of Bucharest lasted only long enough for the new maps of the Balkans yet again to be published. The pact was signed on August 10, 1913. On June 28, 1914, the Archduke Ferdinand, heir to Austro-Hungary, was murdered in Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia, by South Slav subjects of the Hapsburgs. On July 23, 1914, the Austrian government dispatched its eternally infamous "Serbian Note" to Belgrade, the document which in the terrible sequel proved to have been the actual death warrant for Austro-Hungary as an Empire, as well as for the imperial régimes in Germany and Russia. On July 28, Austria declared war on Serbia: on August 1, Germany upon Russia: on August 4, Britain upon Germany. After that the flames first lit in the Balkans blazed around the afflicted planet.

Although the murder of the Archduke was a Balkan event, and the original quarrel between Austria and Serbia was to a certain extent a Balkan quarrel, this is assuredly no place wherein to record the development of Pan-German ambition for world dominion, or how the Potsdam war-lords made unholy alliance with the smaller-caliber politicians of Vienna and Budapesth in their plottings for ruining the resurrected Balkan peoples (and especially Serbia) in favor of the Dual monarchy. To conclude, nevertheless, the last chapter in the annals of the Levant, one may restate the following familiar facts:

The downfall of Abdul Hamid II had brought a temporary set-back to German influence at Constantinople. For a little while Britain, as the home of European liberalism, appeared extremely popular in Young Turk circles. But this mood did not endure. The British diplomats at Constantinople were not personally very

skillful. When the First Balkan Wars began English public opinion was unreservedly on the side of the Christian allies. The aberrations and autocracy of the Young Turks had already disgusted Western liberals. The German agents with greater worldly wisdom ignored ugly deeds, professed complete satisfaction with the new rulers in Stamboul, loaned them money, supplied Krupp artillery, did their best (without upsetting too soon the peace of Europe) to save the Ottomans from the consequences of the Balkan Wars, and as a result somehow gained (possibly at times by sordid means) a great personal ascendancy over the Young Turk leaders. Berhardi and other Pan-German writers confidently reckoned upon the Ottomans as allies in a world war. They did not reckon in vain.

In their sequence the prime events of the World War so far as they touched the Levant were these:

THE "GOEBEN" AND "BRESLAU" AT CONSTANTINOPLE. TURKEY ENTERS THE WAR (OCTOBER, 1914 A. D.)

I. In August, 1914, two German warships, the formidable battle-cruiser *Goeben* and the swift light cruiser *Breslau,* which were then in the Mediterranean, broke through the cordon of British warships and appeared in the Dardanelles. The demands of France and Britain that these vessels should be interned were answered by the Ottoman assertion that they had been purchased for the Sultan's navy.[1] They were in fact given new Turkish names, but their German crews remained on board. They soon lay at Constantinople, practically constituting two Teutonic forts with their guns ready to back up the demands of the astute German ambassador. The presence of these ships of course lent arrogance to that strong party among the "Young Turks" who were resolved to break with the anti-German Allies, and who dreamed of winning back Egypt from Britain and wide territories from Russia as a result of Austro-German assistance.

II. On October 29, 1914, one of these ships, the *Breslau,* nominally now under the Turkish flag, without warning bombarded the Russian Black Sea port of Theodosia. Redress being refused, Russia, followed by Britain and France, speedily declared war upon

[1] The British government recently had seized and placed in its own navy two battleships building in England for Turkey, with which the latter probably expected to dispute the control of the Ægean with Greece. The Turks were extremely exasperated at this action, and were therefore the more willing to receive the German vessels.

the Porte. The Germans and Young Turks had formed projects that by "Pan-Islamic" propaganda serious revolts should be stirred up among the Moslem populations of British India and French North Africa. Nothing decisive, however, came of all this agitation.

III. The Serbians, in the original center of the war, gallantly beat back all attacks aimed against them by Austria through 1914. During the early part of 1915 they were largely let alone by the Teutons. According to common belief, this was somewhat to conciliate Italy, which did not enter the struggle until May, 1915, and which disliked any extension of Austrian power in the Balkans. After that the Teutons could not spare the men to attack Serbia until the fall of 1915. Meantime Roumania, Bulgaria, and Greece were all standing anxiously neutral, balanced between hopes and fears. The consequences of declaring war against the side which might in the end turn out to be victorious were of course terrible.[2]

IV. The Turks allowed German officers to assist them, to plan their main lines of strategy and sometimes actually to command their armies, and also to supply very many technical experts. As a result the Ottomans fought far better in this war than in 1912-1913, but they still excelled only in the defensive. They tried simultaneously to invade Russian Trans-Caucasia and to seize the Suez Canal. Both attempts, however, failed. In the Armenian lands the Russians won steady if not brilliant advantages, and finally, in February, 1916, they captured Erzerum, the chief Ottoman stronghold in the entire region: and followed this advantage by capturing Trebizond in the Black Sea. If the Muscovites could not push their advantages further, it was mainly because their men and munitions were mainly needed for the grueling contest upon their European front—that terrific struggle which in the end wore down and destroyed the Czarist monarchy. As for the Turkish attack upon the Suez Canal, it collapsed ignominiously. In January, 1915, 30,000 men indeed came within gun-shot of the great waterway, but found it so stoutly defended that they retired in confusion. After that, the British gradually pushed across the desert of the Sinai Peninsula and at length transferred the war into Palestine.

[2] In judging the hesitancy of the Balkan nations in 1914-1916, it must of course be remembered that for them the victory of the Allies would not imply so much the victory of liberal France and Britain as of Czarist Russia; with the extreme possibility that if Germany were defeated the whole Near East would fall under the power of the acquisitive autocrats of Petrograd.

The Gallipoli Expedition; Its Failure (1915 A. D.)

V. As 1915 opened, the enormous advantages of forcing the Dardanelles, of seizing Constantinople, and of opening direct sea communications with Russia, were borne home upon British statesmen. The stake was indeed a noble one. The capture of the Turkish capital would probably have shortened the war by two years.[3] Nor, had the enterprise been ably conducted, would it have failed of accomplishment: but few great undertakings were ever less competently handled. The prime requisite to success was to take the Turks by surprise and not give them warning to perfect their fortifications along the Straits. Land and naval forces should have been used together and flung into the attack with scientific precision. The precise reverse was what followed. By ineffective preliminary bombardments the British fleet served ample notice upon the Turks that a vigorous attack was impending. On March 18 a more vigorous and serious naval attack was made. Two British and one French battleships were sunk: and it did not seem possible by naval bombardment to silence the great Krupps in the forts.[4]

The land attack should then have followed instantly. It was delayed one month by egregious mismanagement of the British transport service,[5] until the Turks (now amply warned) had been able to concentrate at least 100,000 men on the Gallipoli peninsula, with the German general, Liman von Sanders, as their very competent chief. The British, with a strong Australian and French corps, forced themselves ashore indeed at the tip of the peninsula on April 25, but their losses were terrible, and they never gained a really comfortable footing upon the land. Every attempt to win the key position, the heights of Krithia, dominating the Dardanelles,

[3] One may compare the "Gallipoli" expedition to the Athenian expedition against Syracuse in 415 B. C. In each case a great venture was made for a great end. In each case the undertaking promised fair, and ought to have succeeded had it been carried out with competent attention to details. In each case an astonishing victory was thrown away by blunders of the commanders. Sir Ian Hamilton veritably seemed the lineal successor of the unfortunate Athenian general, Nikias, albeit a little more competent.

[4] According to seemingly reliable American reports, the Turks, when that naval attack ceased, were at the end of their heavy ammunition and a second attack by the ships would have been sure of success. Panic reigned in Constantinople. The Sultan was ready for flight to Anatolia. The Allied admirals, however, were ignorant of the situation and let a supreme opportunity slip through their hands.

[5] The greatest blunder was the loading of articles absolutely necessary for disembarkation in the *bottom* of the holds of the transports, buried under thousands of tons of relatively useless freight. It was needful to return to Alexandria and turn over the entire loading of the ships before the attack on the Straits could be resumed. This error went far grievously to prolong the war."

was repulsed despite displays of heroism by the British, Australians, and New Zealanders worthy of those Homeric heroes who bled on the plains of Troy across the Straits. Early in August heavy British reënforcements having been received, a last attempt to win the heights failed by a hair's breadth. Blundering generalship in bringing up the reserves threw away the half-won successes. After this the enterprise was realized to be hopeless, and in December and January, 1916, departing in two installments, the British successfully evacuated their hard-won positions on the peninsula. The attempt to win the war in the Near East had thus failed. Two and a half years later, of course, it was to be won in the West.

Bulgaria Joins the Teutons: the Crushing of Serbia (Autumn, 1915 A. D.)

VI. As soon as it was clear the British had been defeated at Gallipoli, tremendous intrigues were renewed by the Germanic diplomats at Sofia. Bulgaria was promised ample revenge for the humiliation of 1913. She could spoil Serbia to her heart's content and become the first power in the Balkan peninsula. The offer was a tempting one. The Bulgarian people were still vengeful and sore over the humiliating treaty of 1913. There was indeed a strong anti-German party, but Czar Ferdinand—confident that he was now backing the winning side—was able to silence it, and commit Bulgaria to the Teutonic coalition. It was a deed which for the moment enabled him to pose as the astute "Augmenter of His Country," but in the end brought disaster to himself and to Bulgaria.

Serbia, scenting danger, now called for aid from Greece according to the terms of their treaty for mutual defense. Venizelos was willing to assist Serbia, but King Constantine [6] was surrounded by Germanophiles: he repudiated the pledge and dismissed his great minister. A Franco-British army which had landed at Salonica now found itself too weak and too late to save the Serbians from an overwhelming double attack by a very large Austro-German army crossing the Danube near Belgrade (October, 1915) and by a Bulgarian army striking in from the east. The Serbs made a gallant stand, but were completely outnumbered. The remnant of their army barely saved itself by a terrible winter retreat across the Albanian mountains to the coast where the Allies ferried it

[6] Son of King George, who had been murdered in 1913.

across to Corfu. All Serbia therefore passed into the hands of its foes as did Montenegro. In those parts which were occupied by the Bulgarians there seem to have been all the cruelties and hideous "atrocities" characteristic of Balkan vengefulness. The Franco-British forces hung on, nevertheless, at Salonica, and were presently joined by the Serbs transported around from Corfu. They could, however, make no real advance in the face of the superior forces opposed, especially as they justly feared an attack upon their rear by King Constantine of Greece, who carried his German sympathies to the point of almost ruining his country.

Intervention and Crushing of Roumania (Autumn, 1916 A. D.)

VII. Roumania had remained neutral until well into 1916, although desperately wooed by both sides. By joining the Western Allies she could hope (if victorious) to win Transylvania with its large Roumanian population; while the Teuton powers, of course, were ready to pay for her aid by promising her the lost territories of Bessarabia possessed by Russia. King Charles, of strongly pro-German antecedents, had died in 1914. Ferdinand, his son and successor, and the Bucharest statesmen around him, had much stronger "Latin" sympathies for France and Italy, while Russia lavished promises of aid. At length on August 27, 1916, Charles declared war upon Austria, thereby involving another Balkan kingdom in the military whirlpool.

The Roumanians struck boldly into Transylvania, but pro-German influences at the now demoralized court of Nicholas II caused them to be grievously deceived in their expectations of Russian assistance. Von Mackensen and Von Falkenhayn, two of the ablest German generals, crushed Ferdinand's armies, seized Bucharest, and soon the only unconquered part of Roumania was a portion of Moldavia. When Russia collapsed, thanks to the Bolshevist revolution (November, 1917), Roumania was thus left isolated and helpless. She had to submit to a very humiliating treaty of peace which handed much territory to Austria and Bulgaria and subjected her natural resources to Teutonic exploitation. This second "Treaty of Bucharest" of course, however, disappeared in thin air with the final collapse of Germany and Austria in November, 1918.

The Armenian Massacres (1915-1916 A. D.)

VIII. While nearly every frontier in Europe and Nearer Asia was becoming a bloody battle-line, the Ottoman was meantime filling up the cup of his iniquity within his Asiatic dominions. The "Young Turks," none too vigorously discouraged by their Prussian allies and preceptors, undertook to facilitate the Ottomanizing of Anatolia by clearing out at least one of the most obnoxious, unassimilative race elements therein. By a systematic massacre, which seems to have no genuine parallel in all the reddened pages of Oriental history, veiling the process under the guise of "deportations," about one million or more of Armenians were done to death. As Talaat Pasha, the Grand Vizier, bluntly informed the American ambassador, "I am taking the necessary steps to make it impossible for the Armenians to even utter the word 'autonomy' for the next fifty years," and when Turkish officials of the more decent type balked at orders almost as revolting to Mohammedan as to Christian ethics, Talaat issued his famous order of September 16, 1915: "An end must be put to their [the Armenians'] existence, however tragic the measures to be taken, and no regard must be paid to either age or sex, or to conscientious scruples." [7] Jenghiz Khan or Timur the Tartar would probably have deliberated long before issuing a similar mandate. Beside the slaughters of 1915, the Bulgarian massacres which evoked Mr. Gladstone's thunders sink to a petty misdemeanor.

The British Campaign in Mesopotamia (1914-1917 A. D.). Allenby's Victory in Palestine (September, 1918 A. D.)

IX. While these hideous events were taking place in Anatolia, Britain (with fitful and not very effective help through Persia by the Russians) was endeavoring to conduct a campaign in the Tigro-Euphrates valley. The army was largely composed of Sepoy troops dispatched and sustained from India. Late in 1914 these forces seized Basra, the old seaport of the Kalifs for their trade with the Far East. During 1915 a small British army penetrated up the Tigris and came within thirty miles of Bagdad before it was met by a superior Ottoman force and compelled to retreat to Kut-el-

[7] After the collapse of Turkey, Talaat Pasha, justly in fear for his life, fled to the supposedly congenial atmosphere of Berlin. Here, on March 15, 1921, he was shot and killed by an Armenian student who openly avowed that he was avenging his slaughtered kinsmen. A German jury honored itself by acquitting the defendant. So occasionally a modicum of justice is wrought even upon offenders in the East.

Amara, a strong position between Bagdad and Basra. Here, after a long siege by the Turks and futile attempts at relief, the invaders were compelled to surrender (April 29, 1916).

British prestige throughout the East was now at stake. Larger forces were sent to the Tigris. Kut was retaken and at last, in March, 1917, Bagdad, which was still a city of much local importance, fell into British hands. The advance was continued a considerable distance farther Northward towards Mosul, but the collapse of Russia and the fact that no success won in so remote a theater of the war could prove decisive prevented the British from pushing this campaign harder. The real blows at the Turks must come nearer the Mediterranean.

X. After the failure of the "Gallipoli" (Dardanelles) Expedition, the British for a considerable time allowed offensive warfare against the Turks to lapse, except in the Tigro-Euphrates valley; but early in 1917 their commanders in Egypt found enough troops available to undertake the offensive towards Syria. After various repulses and after desperate struggles with the problem of transport and water across the desert peninsula of Sinai, the British presently forced their way into Southern Palestine. On November 6 they took the old Philistine stronghold of Gaza, and on December 10, having closed around Jerusalem, it was evacuated by the Turks and in a dramatic hour the "Sacred City" passed out of Moslem hands for the first time since the thirteenth century.

The military situation in France, however, was bad, and the pressing need for all available men to cover Paris made it impossible for the British to spare troops enough to continue this Palestine campaign until heavy reënforcements could be brought up from India. On September 18, 1918, the British forces under General Allenby (with numerous Arab allies [8]) took the offensive against the Turks along the same old battle lines in Central Palestine where once had wrestled the Egyptians with the Hittites. By the 22nd, the Ottoman resistance from the Mediterranean to the Jordan collapsed. The Turkish army, which should have inherited some of the proudest military traditions in the world, dispersed in absolute

[8] A material factor also in changing the situation in Palestine was the revolt of the Arabs under their "Emir" Feisal against the Turks. No more biting comment can be made on the utter failure of the Ottomans to render their rule anything better than a hated military occupation, than to call attention to the fact that *four centuries* after Selim I set up the Turkish horse-tail standards in Syria and Palestine, the native Moslem population welcomed the coming of the Giaours, the British, hardly less than did the native Christians.

rout. The end of October saw the British in Aleppo with all Syria conquered, and the Sultan's armed power in Asia broken.

Collapse of Bulgaria. Surrender of Constantinople (November 13, 1918 A. D.)

XI. As 1918 advanced and as the Allies prospered in the West, means were found to reënforce that army of Serbs, Greeks,[9] French, and British that had clung on so tenaciously at Salonica, retaining a foothold for the Western powers in the Ægean. This "Salonica army" thus at length became large enough to take the offensive against the Bulgars, who were already weary of the war and anxious over its outcome. Beginning on September 22, the Allies began a general attack along the whole Macedonian front. At most points this was highly successful. The news from the Western battlefields had convinced the Bulgars that the war was hopelessly lost to the Teutons and their confederates. King Ferdinand hastily abdicated in favor of his son, Boris. In behalf of his nation, which, in 1913 and again in 1915, he had led into disastrous wars, on September 30 the Bulgarian generals concluded an armistice which amounted to an absolute surrender. Bulgaria demobilized her army, evacuated the occupied territories in Serbia and Roumania, and virtually cast herself upon the mercy of the Allies to determine her future boundaries and her general fate. So the World War which had begun in the Balkan peninsula saw the first real evidences of its end in that same blood-soaked and distracted region.

XII. As the tidings of disasters from Palestine and still more from Bulgaria came into Constantinople, the peace party among the ill-assorted elements that governed in the name of Mohammed VI [10] gained the upper hands in the divan. It might still have been possible to contest a British advance through Anatolia, but the collapse of Bulgaria threatened to give the Salonica army a clear right-of-way to the very gates of Constantinople. Ottoman envoys therefore went out to the British fleet at Lemnos, and on October 30 the demoralized and despairing Turks signed a general capitulation

[9] In 1917 the French and British at last ended their patience with the "neutrality" of Constantine of Greece. They forced him to retire to Switzerland: his son was proclaimed as King Alexander, and Venizelos, who had been in exile at Salonica, returned as prime minister to Athens. Venizelos at once threw all the resources of Greece on the side of the Allies, and caused her to declare war on Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany.

[10] Mohammed VI succeeded Mohammed V in 1918. He was the son of Sultan Abdul Medjid: had been born in 1861, had received no decent education, and was simply another pliable, pious nonentity.

which practically placed their forfeited Empire in liquidation, with the victorious Allies as receivers.

On November 9, the mines having been swept away, British troops occupied the forts by the Dardanelles, thus placing that waterway in Christian hands for the first time in more than five and a half centuries. On November 10, at three o'clock in the afternoon, a gray transport conveying English soldiers swung around the point of the old Seraglio palace and entered the Golden Horn. It was received by a silent, seemingly unemotional crowd which greeted this van of the conquerors with curiosity rather than with anger. Finally, on November 13, in a long, grim file, British, French, Italian, and Greek battleships glided down before the city, dropped anchor, and quietly sent their marines ashore. In this unspectacular fashion did the lurid drama which began when the Turanian Turks passed from Europe into Asia enter upon another act leading up to the inevitable epilogue.

CHAPTER XXXV

EPILOGUE—THE END OF AN ERA IN LEVANTINE HISTORY

It would be absurd in a narrative beginning with 330 A. D. to discuss with disproportionate detail the events in the Near East between the capitulation of Turkey in 1918 and this writing (1922).

Of all the treaties which affected to liquidate the World War, that of Sèvres (1920), between the Western Powers and Turkey, was the one most obviously writ in water. From the outset this pact seemed to be hardly more than provisional because of at least the following complex factors:

I. The disablement of Russia by the Bolshevist Revolution and the certainty that this mighty, if very unfortunate, country would demand a pronounced share in the remolding of the Levant, the moment she possessed a government not too distracted with internal griefs, and able to resume something like the place of the old Czarist Empire in the international world.

II. The Turkish "Nationalist Movement," involving the setting up at Angora in Anatolia of a separate government, defying the feeble administration of the Sultan, Mohammed VI, at Constantinople, on the ground that the old government is subject to Western domination and has ceased to be a free agent.

III. The clamor among the Moslems of India in behalf of the "rights" of the Sultan as "Kalif" of Orthodox Islam. However trifling the real honor which the alleged Kalifs at Stamboul received in Hindustan in the past, this artificial "Kalifate agitation" (part of the general movement for an independent India) has forced the British government to modify its attitude of pronounced hostility to the Ottoman dominion.

IV. The pitiful return of the old rivalries of France, Britain, and Italy for the privilege of exploiting and controlling the Levant. For example, until the great petroleum fields of Mesopotamia are in the assured possession of a competent civilized state, it is useless to speculate whether the fertile country which gave to the world the civilizations of Babylon and of Bagdad can again play an important part in human progress.

V. The complications caused in the Ægean lands by the expulsion from power in Greece (1920) of the great minister Venizelos and by the restoration of the pro-German king, Constantine, with the consequence of an extreme hostility to Greek ambitions on the part of France.

At this moment it seems probable that, to the outraging of all Western public opinion, and especially that of America, the Ottoman Sultans will be granted a circumscribed and tenuous occupation of Constantinople for at least a little longer, although with only a limited Thracian hinterland, while Anatolia, including much oft crucified Armenia, will continue in the possession of the sons of Ertoghrul. This is a pitiful fulfillment of the promises of many Franco-British statesmen during the World War. It represents

apparently a non-moral temporary arrangement dictated by sordid expediency, and promises new wars in the not distant future.

Nevertheless the World War, whatever may ensue, probably marks the transition to a new epoch in the annals of the Near East. If the Straits of Constantinople remain under some form of Western control, even though the Sultans may lord it again in the city of Constantinople they will be too open to speedy naval coercion to continue safely in the habits of Asiatic barbarism. Some degree of modernization in what remains of the Ottoman Empire seems inevitable. Even the dead letter of the Koran cannot in the end destroy the effects of the printing press and the new science. Syria and Mesopotamia have passed respectively under French and British protectorates, while the hinterland of those regions has fallen to a new "Arabian" kingdom, which represents the revival of the old Semitic spirit of independence, held down but not destroyed during the nine hundred years since Turkish military adventurers began to create their sultanates upon the ruins of the Abbasside kalifate. In Palestine, by a Semitic revival more amazing still, the Zionists, under British protection, are striving to undo the work of Titus in 70 A. D. and to create again a "Jewish homeland" upon the territories of old Israel. Finally, in Egypt, if the "Nationalist" movement there seems likely to obtain the removal of the more obnoxious evidences of the British protectorate, the Turkish domination of the old "House of Bondage" has undoubtedly vanished forever, and there is once again a "King of Egypt" upon a throne which has seemed lost to native dynasts practically ever since Cambyses the Persian overthrew the last genuine Pharaoh, Psamtik II, in 525 B. C.[1]

Outside of a narrow corner in Europe, and his last unfortunate stronghold, Anatolia, the Ottoman seems to have lost for good an empire once extending from Buda to Yemen; and this will probably remain true however much the Moslem Orient, across Africa and Asia, may react in hostility against the ambitious policies and exploitations of the hated "Giaour" powers. For all practical purposes, save for the city of Constantinople and its immediate hinter-

[1] At this writing the British hold upon the new protected "Kingdom of Irak" (Mesopotamia, centering around Bagdad) and the French control of Northern Syria are decidedly uncertain. The same to a lesser degree is true also of the British protectorate in Palestine where the Arab and Christian populations seem strongly opposed to the intrusion of the "Zionist" colonies, and the prospective Judaizing of the whole region. An Arabian kingdom embracing nearly all the old Semitic lands is quite within the range of possibilities. This however would be a large improvement over the old Turkish régime. Culturally the Syrian Arab is far superior to the Turk.

land, the Turanian assault on Europe which began in the fourteenth century has thus ended with the expulsion of the alien intruders.

Concerning the new map of the Balkans this epilogue can wisely say little. Thanks to the breakup of the pretentious Austrian and Russian Empires, the South Slavs and the Roumanians territorially have now largely come to their own. *Jugo-Slavia* (Serbia, plus Montenegro, Bosnia, Croatia, etc.) embraces an area quite equal in extent, although with by no means the same boundaries, as that shortlived "Empire" of Stephen Dushan which has hitherto marked the Serbian golden age. *Roumania,* by the annexation of Bessarabia and Transylvania, to-day possesses a dominion probably far larger than ever was ruled by the imperial legates of Roman Dacia in the most fortunate days of Trajan's conquest. Unhappy *Bulgaria,* betrayed by an unscrupulous and over-clever king into backing the losing side of the World War, has indeed forfeited her outlet upon the Ægean and faces the humiliations of a defeated although not of a ruined nation; while *Albania* has her turbulent destinies still tied up with the policies and fortunes of her more advanced neighbors. Modern *Greece,* however, although racked by very terrible problems, has apparently passed far beyond the experimental stage. Even without Constantinople or Eastern Thrace or Ionia she embraces within a considerable country the majority of that versatile, gifted race which, despite two thousand years of wars and tyrannies and also the dilution of much alien blood, has never forgotten that its traditional ancestors once turned back the might of Asia at Marathon, when "Europe" and the things therein implied were very young. The present burdens of the Greeks are many but the future is before them.[2]

Summary of Events in the Ottoman Lands from 1918 to 1922

Inasmuch as events in Thrace and Anatolia during the four years following the World War are bound to have high importance for the understanding of things sure to come, a brief outline of recent

[2] Of all the Balkan Levantine peoples the Greeks (notwithstanding their admitted shortcomings) possess the clearest cultural traditions and the best claim to the civilized leadership in the Near East. It is unfortunate that certain Americans have allowed their personal sympathies for certain Bulgarians to lead them into utterances defamatory of the Greeks, and even apologetic concerning the "Unspeakable Turk."

The vices of the Greeks are what might be expected in a clever, versatile people, ground down for two thousand years by Roman, Byzantine, and Turk and forced to mitigate their lot by use of their wits. All this is said with every allowance for the fatuous policy of adventure pursued by Constantine I and his advisers in Anatolia after the dismissal of Venizelos. Modern Athens has paid even more heavily than Ancient Athens for having driven into exile her "Aristeides."

Levantine history will be the most fitting postscript for a story already covering nearly sixteen centuries.

I. The Turkish government temporarily collapsed after the surrender in 1918, and the Ottomans resigned themselves to very drastic changes. However the permanent settlement of the Near East was calamitously delayed by the whole complex problem of dealing with Germany and with Soviet Russia. The Moslems of Anatolia were outraged at the expressed intention of the victorious nations to divide them up into small districts for selfish exploitation. Simultaneously serious divisions developed between Britain, France, and Italy, paralyzing their Near Eastern policies, while the Turks recovered courage, won the moral and financial support of the Moslems of India and North Africa,[3] and collected weapons and munitions. The result was a revival of Turkish nationalism in the true center of the Ottoman race—inner Anatolia. Here at Angora (1919) gathered a "National Assembly" under the leadership of the astute Kemal Pasha, which issued a defiance of the foreigners and of the feeble Sultan now shivering under the guns of the foreign warships. The Greeks meantime had seized Smyrna and indulged in outrages upon the Turkish peasants of the region.

II. The western powers after fatal delays put through the *Treaty of Sèvres* (August, 1920) between themselves and the helpless ministers of the Sultan at Constantinople. By this pact practically all Thrace was ceded to Greece while the district of Smyrna was placed under Greek control. The Sultan was allowed to keep a personal residence in Constantinople, but no garrison, and the city was to be for all intents "internationalized." The Dardanelles, Bosphorus and a zone on each bank of the Marmora were also

[3] The much discussed *"Pan-Islamic movement"* had its main center and significance in British India and French North Africa rather than among the Moslems of the Levant. To a large extent it was the reaction of Orientals against exploitation by Europeans, and had a political and economic rather than a strictly religious significance. However, all over Islam there was sympathy for the Turks after 1918, as being the most conspicuous sufferers from "Giaour" oppression. The problems of Pan Islamism lie outside the scope of this book.

The claims of the Turkish Sultans as "Kalifs" counted for little beyond their own dominions, prior to very recent times. The "Kalifs" at Stamboul were prayed for perfunctorily in every Orthodox (Sunnite) mosque from Algiers to Sulu; but they were very far from being "Mohammedan Popes." Abdul Hamid II, however, in his efforts to circumvent the European powers, sent out his emissaries to all Mohammedan lands to preach and glorify his claims as "Commander of the Faithful"; and prominent Moslems from India and elsewhere were invited to Stamboul, entertained royally, and sent away charged with a feeling that true believers must hold together, and that the Sultan was the natural leader of all Islam. After the World War ended, the treatment of the "Kalif" by the Western powers became a sentimental grievance in many Mohammedan circles, that were really disaffected towards Britain, France, and Italy for nationalistic and economic reasons.

declared internationalized and neutralized. This treaty was never genuinely put into effect; the Kemalists utterly rejected it, and the French speedily set to work to undermine it entirely.

III. From the outset the above arrangement was disliked by the Italians and French. The Italians feared lest Greece should become a great Mediterranean power, their rival in strength. The French believed that behind Greece stood England, and that the superior British fleet would really control the "internationalized" Straits of Constantinople. The great expansion of Greece was really the achievement of Venizelos, working quite evidently in conjunction with England. Greece was a maritime country, easily controlled by a foreign sea-power, and calculated to be a most useful ally to Britain in the Levant. The great minister's people however were becoming tired of being kept under constant mobilization, and were weary of an ambitious policy demanding great national sacrifices. Late in 1920 when King Alexander suddenly died, the Greeks voted by a large majority to recall the pro-German King Constantine (brother-in-law of William II.), and Venizelos at once quitted his country. He had lifted Greece to the rank of a considerable nation by sheer personal genius. Small politicians now threw away most of his gains.

IV. The French hated Constantine with a perfect hatred. Britain indeed gave him considerable countenance, but France refused to recognize him and felt she had a good excuse for upsetting the Sèvres treaty. The French flirted with Kemal at Angora, and presently made a direct treaty with his government (1921), behind the back of Britain. As for Constantine, although recalled in the belief that he would secure a stable peace for the Greeks, he was unable to drop Venizelos's projects in Anatolia. On the contrary with at least tacit British approval he actually undertook to conquer the western half of Asia Minor and to break up the Kemalists. For this capital military venture the Greeks lacked alike the numbers and the martial genius. After indecisive battles their attack on the Angora Turks at last failed. The Turks were now fighting vigorously in and for their own special homeland, and were showing their rising temper by wholesale massacres of such Greek and Armenian Christians as fell into their power. The Near East needed a lasting peace, but the Constantinian Greeks refused to quit Anatolia and even talked grandiloquently of seizing Constantinople,

now controlled by commissioners for the Allied Western powers. Meantime the Kemalists became ever more arrogant and aggressive.

V. In August, 1922, apparently with French munitions and French counsellors, the Kemalists suddenly attacked the Greek positions in Bithynia. The Greeks were in poor morale, worn out by long campaigning, and miserably led. Their army was utterly routed and evacuated Anatolia with almost incredible speed. The Turks (proving themselves once again to be first-class warriors) drove straight onward to Smyrna, which they took (September 9, 1922) and then burned. The world was again horrified by one of the now standardized Ottoman massacres of conquered populations. Meantime in Athens Constantine was inevitably deposed by a popular uprising, and replaced by his son, George II.

VI. The Turks at once demanded the instant restoration of Eastern Thrace and of Constantinople. France and Italy decidedly supported their claims. British influence, however, throughout the entire Moslem Orient would have been blasted had the Kemalists been allowed to return to Europe save under decent conditions. When the Kemalists threatened war on Britain if they were hindered at the Straits, a large British armament was hastened to Constantinople, while France and Italy (unwilling to break with Britain over other matters) tardily urged on the victorious Turks moderation. On October 10, 1922, a convention between the Western Powers and the Kemalists was signed at Mudania by which Eastern Thrace up to the Maritza river was to be restored to the civil government of the Turks within forty-five days; but the Turks were not to repossess Constantinople nor to introduce a large army into Thrace until after a formal peace conference which was to determine their precise position in their old capital, the problem of the "Internationalization" of the Straits, and the baffling question of the "protection of the Christian minorities,"—already nearly exterminated in Anatolia.

Such was the miserable situation existing in the Levant when this volume went to press. Once more the Turk had proved himself a superior fighter and a bloody barbarian. Once more his presence in the Near East had been provocative of inhuman passions alike among friends and foes. Once more because the so-called Christian powers were unable to compose their unlovely feuds he was to be allowed new opportunities for hatching mischief.

At this moment British prestige in the Levant is very low, thanks to the military collapse of Britain's protegé, the Greeks. French prestige, thanks to the favor shown the victorious Kemalists, is perhaps greater than at any earlier moment since Francis I made his treaty with Solyman the Magnificent. How long this condition may last who may tell? Who, also, whether there can be any

genuine settlement of the Levant until a revived Russia has in her power her one great sea-door—the Straits of Constantinople?

Only one prophecy seems certain. For many years to come the eyes of thoughtful men will be turned anxiously upon the complex problems of the Near East. To understand even a modicum of those problems, it is needful to understand the long, tangled history of their past.

Table of

TERRITORIES UNDER TURKISH DOMINION IN 1683 and the Dates of Their Detachment

Giving either date of the treaty of cession, or of their actual physical loss.

Hungary	1699	Lost to Austria.
Crimea, South Russia, etc. ..	1774	Virtual expulsion of Turks; 1784, annexation by Russia.
Egypt	1808	Virtual autonomy under Mehemet Ali; 1882, British occupation; 1914, repudiation of Turkish suzerainty; 1922, establishment of "Kingdom of Egypt."
Serbia	1815	Partial autonomy; 1829, complete autonomy; 1878, independence.
Roumania	1829	Turkish protectorate becomes nominal; 1878, independence. [*Bessarabia* non-Turkish since 1812.]
Greece	1829	Independence; 1882, 1913, 1920, additional Turkish lands annexed.
Caucasus Lands.	1829	and 1878, ceded in part to Russia.
Bulgaria	1878	Weak protectorate; 1885, Eastern Roumelia added; 1908, independence.
Bosnia	1878	Under Austrian control; 1908, annexed by Austria.
Cyprus	1878	Ceded to Britain.
Tripoli	1912	Surrendered to Italy.
Albania	1913	Cut adrift from Turkey.
Macedonia	1913	Divided between Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria.
Thrace	1913	Lost in part to Bulgaria [later to Greece].
Ægean Islands and Crete	1913	Lost to Greece.
Arabia	1918	Seceded as "Kingdom of Arabia."
Palestine	1918	Occupied by Britain, for "Zionists."
Mesopotamia ..	1918	Occupied by Britain and Arabian insurgents.
Gallipoli Peninsula	1920	Occupied by Allied Western Powers.
Syria	1920	Occupied by France.

Leaving after the World War to the successors of Mohammed II, Selim the Grim, and Solyman the Magnificent the remaining possession of *Anatolia*, plus the city of *Constantinople* with *Eastern Thrace*.

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